

Woman bites off boy's tongue
gossiping

Motorist's arrest brings free flight home

Yul Brynner's Magnificent Seven to be questioned

Karaoke beats a new world in 32 moves

Sharon out of negotiating team

German, Israel ministers to meet

Titanic sinks again

Egypt seeks help for Ghali

Abuja (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa on Friday sought the cooperation of Nigeria in ensuring the reelection of U.N. Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, who is an Egyptian, for another term. Mr. Musa, who arrived in the country late Thursday, made the appeal during a meeting with his Nigerian counterpart, Tom Ikimi, a source close to the talks told AFP. During the meeting, which lasted for about two hours, the Egyptian minister spoke about cordial relations that exist between the two countries and the need for African countries to give their support to Dr. Ghali, the source said. The United States is currently leading a campaign against the reelection of the U.N. secretary-general, accusing him of not being able to carry out expected reforms in the organisation during his first term.

Sharon out of negotiating team

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday excluded hawkish Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon from his team in charge of negotiations with the Palestinians, Israeli public radio said. It said a weekly cabinet meeting approved the creation of a ministerial team to be headed by Mr. Netanyahu. The radio did not name the three ministers chosen for the team, but said that Mr. Netanyahu's decision to keep Mr. Sharon out of the group was approved by 15 out of 17 cabinet members. The team is due to oversee negotiations on the Israeli army's delayed redeployment from most of the West Bank town of Hebron. It is also charged with supervising the Israeli-Palestinian steering committee which deals with all other political negotiations between Jewish state and the Palestinian National Authority.

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المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية للراي

Hijacked Sudanese plane returns to Khartoum

KHARTOUM (AP) — A Sudanese airliner hijacked by seven Iraqis thought to be seeking asylum returned to Khartoum on Friday after dropping off passengers at their original destination. The Airbus 310 landed at Khartoum airport with more than 180 people aboard, most of them Sudanese, said Mohammad Al-Hassan Taha, the airport's director-general. Several passengers were first taken to Amman, the flight's scheduled destination (see story on page 3). Mr. Taha said a committee including the crew and local aviation authorities would investigate the hijacking further. Seven Iraqis hijacked the plane Monday shortly after it left Khartoum on the flight to Amman. The hijackers forced the plane to land in London, where they surrendered to police. They are believed to be seeking political asylum.

Settlers to spend night at tomb near Nablus

NABLUS (AFP) — The Israeli military gave several dozen Israeli settlers permission Friday to spend the night in Joseph's tomb near the Palestinian city of Nablus, military sources said. It was the first time that such authorisation has been given. Previously, Jews only had the right to pray and then leave what is thought to be the tomb of the Biblical Joseph. A Yeshiva, or Jewish religious school, was opened near the tomb several years ago. The Israeli military has beefed up its presence around the building to protect the settlers, the military sources added.

German, Israel ministers to meet

BONN (AFP) — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy is to meet with his German counterpart Klaus Kinkel in Bonn on Sept. 9 to discuss bilateral relations and the Middle East peace process. Mr. Kinkel's office said, Mr. Levy's visit will be the first by an Israeli minister since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government took over in May. Earlier Friday, the German government said it was deeply preoccupied by the Israeli government's decision to expand Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and added that the move would hamper the peace process. Foreign ministry spokesman Martin Erdmann said Bonn supported a European Union declaration expressing the same concern, and said he hoped the decision to expand the settlements would not compromise the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Titanic sinks again

NEW YORK (AFP) — The myth of the Titanic remains intact: 84 years after it sank off the Newfoundland coast, a multimillion-dollar, high-tech salvage effort failed to bring up a piece of the "unsinkable" cruise ship. Salvagers lost control of a section of the Titanic's hull near the surface of the North Atlantic ocean early Friday, sinking salvage hopes this year as the 10-tonne piece returned to its watery grave about 4,000 metres below the surface. The hull section had been raised to 65 metres below the ocean's surface where salvagers "stopped because the equipment was burning the nylon rope," said George Tulloch, expedition leader for RMS Titanic Incorporated (see earlier story inside).

Egypt seeks help for Ghali

ABUJA (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa on Friday sought the cooperation of Nigeria in ensuring the reelection of U.N. Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, who is an Egyptian, for another term. Mr. Musa, who arrived in the country late Thursday, made the appeal during a meeting with his Nigerian counterpart, Tom Ikimi, a source close to the talks told AFP. During the meeting, which lasted for about two hours, the Egyptian minister spoke about cordial relations that exist between the two countries and the need for African countries to give their support to Dr. Ghali, the source said. The United States is currently leading a campaign against the reelection of the U.N. secretary-general, accusing him of not being able to carry out expected reforms in the organisation during his first term.

Israel thwarts Palestinian mass prayer protest at Aqsa



A Palestinian boy grabs hold of an Israeli soldier's rifle as he holds hands with his father while walking through the Old City on their way to attend Friday prayers at Al Aqsa Mosque (Reuters photo)

Occupation army bans faithful from entering East Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel thwarted Palestinian plans to stage a mass prayer protest at Jerusalem's Al Aqsa mosque on Friday by ringing the city with police and roadblocks. Paramilitary police turned back worshippers at checkpoints along the border between Arab East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Barely 20,000 Palestinians made it to the mosque complex inside Jerusalem's walled old city, according to Palestinians. Israeli police put the number at 8,000.

Usually nearly 30,000 Palestinians attend Friday prayers at Al Aqsa.

"The presence today was less than normal weeks because of the unjust Israeli measures of placing roadblocks, and terrorising people, by deploying large numbers of soldiers," Hasan Tabboub, minister of Islamic affairs in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), told Reuters.

The government brought extra police into the city fearing clashes after Palestinian President Yasser Arafat called on Palestinians to flock to Jerusalem for traditional Friday prayers to protest against Israeli policy on Jerusalem and Jewish settlement. The prayers passed off peacefully.

Mr. Tabboub and Israeli authorities had expected 100,000 Palestinians to heed the call. Mr. Arafat himself attended prayers in the northern West Bank town of Nablus.

He launched the protest together with a general strike on Thursday while accusing the new right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of refusing to

implement the Oslo self-rule accord signed by the previous Labour government. Israel drew Palestinian anger this week by demolishing Palestinian community centre in East Jerusalem which city officials said was built "illegally." It also disclosed plans to expand West Bank settlements.

Mr. Arafat was also angered by Mr. Netanyahu's refusal so far to meet him and to redeploy Israeli troops in Hebron, the only West Bank town still under occupation.

Soldiers placed roadblocks at the Gush Etzion Jewish settlements near Hebron to prevent Palestinians travelling to Jerusalem on Friday.

Hebronites who skirted that checkpoint were held up at another outside Bethlehem.

"I want to go through in solidarity with Arafat," said Mohammad Kaharan, one of groups of middle-aged and old men arguing in vain with soldiers in the heat haze of the Bethlehem road.

Young men did not even try to cross as police routinely turn back teenagers and men in their 20s since suicide attacks on Israelis began in 1994.

Mohammed Abu Sneh, 55, a clothes merchant from Hebron, said he had intended to observe Mr. Arafat's call to prayer. He said he and others turned back were not discouraged.

"We will find our way to get to Jerusalem and to defend Jerusalem," Mr. Abu Sneh said. "I think the battle for Jerusalem has started. It is not only for us as Palestinians, but for all

70 Palestinian buildings set for destruction

THE JERUSALEM municipality plans to tear down 70 illegally constructed Palestinian buildings in the eastern sector of the city in coming months, Yediot Aharonot newspaper reported Friday.

Courts have issued orders to destroy the buildings, an unnamed high-level city official told the paper.

The deputy mayor, Shmuel Meir of the National Religious Party (NRP), said that "all the buildings that were illegally put up in the eastern or western sectors of Jerusalem will be destroyed."

The NRP is part of Israel's ruling right-wing coalition. Mr. Meir also accused the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) of financing part of the illegal construction and said that 170,000 East Jerusalem Palestinians had 12,000 building permits that they have not even used.

A spokesman for the municipality said five buildings have been torn down this year in East Jerusalem.

But he rejected the number of other buildings earmarked for destruction, as given by the newspaper, as "baseless" and said the whole report was intended to raise tension.

Municipality bulldozers on Tuesday tore down a building Palestinian youths used for sports activities in Jerusalem's Old City.

This angered Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, who Thursday called a four-hour general strike in the Palestinian territories and mass

King urges Netanyahu to implement all agreements

Kabariti assails Israel over settlements and Jerusalem after Ramallah talks with Arafat

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has urged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to implement all accords with the Palestinians to overcome a growing crisis between the two sides, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The King telephoned Mr. Netanyahu on Thursday night after Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti met Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

The King "stressed the need to implement the agreements signed between Israel and the Palestinian side and to work to prevent a deterioration in the situation, to confront all the difficulties facing the peace process and to emerge from the current crisis," Petra said.

Mr. Kabariti also denounced the continued Israeli closure of the Palestinian territories, which he said was leading to "the

starvation of Palestinian people."

The agency quoted Mr. Netanyahu as saying in reply his government was committed to implementing the self-rule accords which the previous Labour government signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Mr. Kabariti said in Ramallah Israel attempts to talk peace while building new settlements were futile.

"We informed the president (Arafat) that we do not accept any analysis that calls for continuing settlement expansion and at the same time to say that the peace process is all right," he said.

Mr. Kabariti also denounced the continued Israeli closure of the Palestinian territories, which he said was leading to "the

starvation of Palestinian people."

Petra quoted Mr. Kabariti as saying that "Jordan cannot accept any expansion of settlements and we have reaffirmed to the Palestinian leader that any aggression on the holy shrines will be regarded as an aggression directed against us and against our feelings."

"We have reaffirmed to President Arafat that we want to see an end to the Israeli siege on the Palestinians so that the peace process can resume," added Mr. Kabariti.

The prime minister told reporters in Ramallah that he carried a message to Mr. Arafat from King Hussein "reaffirming our stand by him and our support for the Palestinian National

Authority and its efforts to achieve peace and restore the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

"We fully realise the obstacles impeding the peace process and we feel there is urgent need for Jordanian, Palestinian, pan-Arab and international efforts to remove these obstacles to ensure the resumption of the peace process," added Mr. Kabariti.

He expressed hope that "Jordan through its contacts and efforts will help find a final settlement to the outstanding problems and help move the efforts forward towards negotiations over a final settlement that will enable the Palestinians realise their national aspirations in their own state."

MENA summit at centre of Levy's talks in Egypt

World Economic Forum insists Cairo conference should go ahead as planned

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt's threat to scrap a regional economic conference set for November will be at the centre of talks Sunday between Egyptian leaders and Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, officials said Friday.

Mr. Levy will meet President Hosni Mubarak and Foreign Minister Amr Musa in the northern city of Alexandria amid renewed efforts to breathe new life into the deadlocked Middle East peace process.

Egyptian sources said Mr. Musa and Mr. Levy would discuss the Middle East peace process and the "possibilities" of convening a planned regional economic conference in Cairo.

Mr. Mubarak has threatened to cancel the third Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference due to take place Nov. 12-14 if there is no progress in the peace process.

Mr. Levy's one-day visit to Egypt will be his first official foreign trip since he took office following the right-wing election victory in May 29 polls.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Egypt in July for talks with Mr. Mubarak, but

relations between the two countries have been tense because of his uncompromising, hardline stance on the peace process which has notably ruled out the principle of trading Arab land for peace.

Mr. Musa meanwhile warned that the Arabs would not "offer regional cooperation to Israel on a silver platter."

Israel cannot continue to build more settlements, refuse to implement the agreements which have been concluded and halt the peace process and still talk of regional cooperation," Mr. Musa told the Arab daily Asharq Al Awsat.

Mr. Musa also told the Israeli daily Maariv that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's standing was "becoming weaker every day, something which cannot be helpful either to the Arabs or to Israel."

Earlier Friday Mr. Mubarak's chief advisor Osama Al Baz said Cairo was still waiting from Israel "concrete measures to unblock the peace process notably by halting the (Jewish) settlements."

Dr. Baz was speaking on his return from Paris where on Wednesday he met Mr. Netanyahu's foreign policy

advisor Dore Gold and U.S. State Department coordinator for the peace process Dennis Ross.

He said the meeting examined ways of reviving the peace process, saying Israel's new policy of expanding Jewish settlements in the occupied territories was a "bigger obstacle than ever" to the peace process.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) said on Friday that the MENA summit should go ahead in Cairo in November as it was vital to maintain foreign investor confidence in the region.

The Geneva-based group, which organises the annual gathering of world political and business leaders in the Swiss resort of Davos, said that cancellation of the Cairo summit would be a catastrophe for all countries of the region.

In a statement, the forum said summits held in Casablanca in 1994 and in Amman last year had been instrumental in bringing a "business dimension to the peace and reconciliation process."

"The effect of the current political environment is to slow down this momentum and enthusiasm. Should this

trend continue it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to reconstitute economic optimism on the part of the international business community," it said.

"The building of trust generated to date will be jeopardised," it added.

Klaus Schwab, founder and president of the forum, was quoted as saying: "The cancellation of the summit in Cairo would certainly be a catastrophe for all countries of the region."

Norway joined Egypt on Friday in criticising Israel's decision to build up settlement areas in the West Bank and said Mr. Musa would visit Oslo for talks next week.

Norway has a role as a broker in the Middle East peace process, since it hosted secret meetings between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators that led to the signing of the Oslo peace accord in 1993.

"We are certainly concerned about the Israeli initiative with regard to the settlements," foreign ministry spokesman Ingvald Havnen told Reuters. "We think this is the wrong signal with regard to the resumption of the peace process."

Iraq oil-for-food deal will take time to implement — diplomats

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The U.N. "oil-for-food" resolution easing six years of crippling sanctions on Iraq could take a month and a half to implement, a U.N. official and diplomats said here Friday.

"Such a large-scale operation is very complex to carry out," the coordinator of U.N. humanitarian activities in Iraq, Gualtero Fulcheri, said.

Two senior diplomats said U.N. Security Council Resolution 986 allowing Iraq to sell up to \$2 billion of crude every six months to buy food and medicine would not be enacted before mid-October.

"This is quite possible," Mr. Fulcheri told AFP, saying several steps remain to be taken before Iraqis could taste food bought with oil money.

"First of all, the United Nations has to give the go-ahead sign for the operation to start and this would only be done after the U.N. structure to monitor exports and imports is ready to operate," the Italian said.

Iraq would then solicit tenders from foreign suppliers of civilian goods, and orders would only proceed with the approval of the U.N. Sanctions Committee overseeing

the embargo imposed on Iraq when it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

"Then we should allow some time for the goods to be shipped over to Iraq, co-voiced to warehouses and finally distributed to the population."

The arrival in Baghdad in the next few days of U.N. monitors who will control the quantity and quality of the crude Iraq exports "will mark the first step in the set up of the monitoring structure."

Next, U.N. observers will be deployed here to verify the nature of the goods at the entry points and "to make sure that

distribution is fairly done" across Iraq, he said.

Imports will come mainly through Iraq's southern port of Umm Qasr, on the Gulf, he added.

According to the Iraqi distribution plan approved by the United Nations in July, the food bought with oil money is to supplement the monthly rations the government gives the population.

"Monitoring will be carried out at the ration distribution centres," Mr. Fulcheri said. In Kurdish-held northern Iraq, where no such support structure exists, the U.N.

humanitarian programme must hand out the food and medicine in the name of the Iraqi government.

The official estimated that more than 270 U.N. employees will come in to monitor exports, imports and distribution. The cost of the operation "will be less than three per cent of the \$2 billion" of oil sold every six months, or about \$10 million a month, he said.

"The Iraqi government has very clear ideas about the needs of the population and this should speed up the import process," he added.

Announcement from Jordan Electricity Authority

In accordance with the resolution of the Cabinet dated April 9, 1994 regarding restructuring of the electricity sector, Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) will cease to exist and will be succeeded by the National Electric Power Company (NEPCO) as from September 1, 1996.

NEPCO is a public share holding company, wholly owned by the Government of Jordan and will be the legal successor of JEA. Therefore it will shoulder all JEA commitments, rights and obligations towards others.

NEPCO address, telex, telephone & fax numbers shall remain as those of JEA.

Director General of JEA
Dipl. Ing M. S. Arafah

Rafsanjani vows to make Baghdad pay war damages

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani vowed on Friday to make Iraq pay war reparations for the 1980-88 conflict between the two countries.

"Iraq as the aggressor in the war owes us and we will eventually make it pay in compensation," the president said in a speech before weekly prayers at Tehran University.

"International organisations have ruled in our favor and declared us the innocent in the war," he added.

Iran says the war inflicted \$1 trillion in damages on the country and has demanded \$100 billion under U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 which ended the conflict on Aug. 20, 1988.

Full-scale war began on Sept. 22, 1980, more than one year after the Shiite Muslim revolution in Tehran, and ended eight years later in virtual stalemate.

The Iranian ambassador to the United Nations on Thursday formally denied U.S. accusations that his country was helping Iraq evade sanctions by smuggling oil through Iranian waters.

An Iranian mission spokesman said U.N. sanctions Committee Chairman Tono Eitel on Thursday informed Ambassador Kamal Karrazi verbally of the U.S. accusations which were detailed to the committee by two U.S. State Department experts on Wednesday.

The ambassador denied the U.S. accusations of Iranian government complicity in the illegal export of Iraqi fuel, in violation of six-year old international sanctions imposed since the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the spokesman said.

He added that the Iranian envoy specifically denied involvement by the revolutionary guards, who according to U.S. officials were organising the sanctions-busting and charging "protection fees."

According to the Americans, Tehran has been allowing small boats into its territorial waters to evade the multinational force monitoring the sanctions.

Iranian officials are reportedly providing the ships with false papers purporting to show that Gasoli, a refined oil product, was loaded in Iran when the ships never actually visited the country.

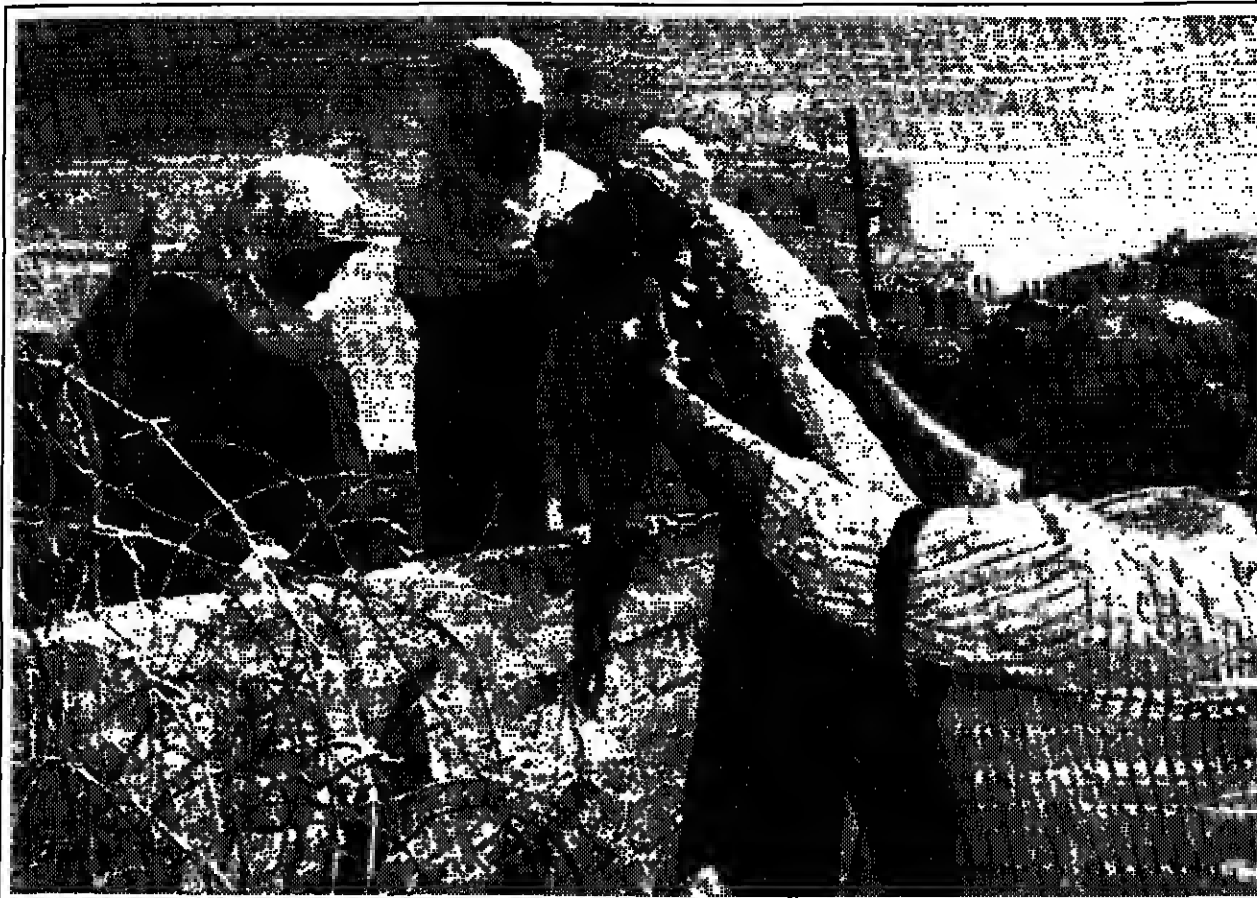
The U.S. delegation on Wednesday provided photographic and documentary evidence aimed at backing up the claims.

The Sanctions Committee has asked for a written report before deciding on any action.

But western diplomats said Thursday that the amounts concerned, totalling a maximum of 20,000 tonnes per month since February, were not very large.

One diplomat commented that the American charges were "not very serious," and that in an election period, Iraq was a convenient "whipping boy" for Washington.

The Sanctions Committee is likely to agree on a letter warning Iran to abide by its obligations under the sanctions regime, western diplomats said.



DEFYING SIEGE: A Palestinian baby is lifted over a cement and barbed wire wall to a relative Friday as Palestinians cross the "green line" border as they leave the West Bank and enter Jerusalem in order to attend Friday prayers at Al Aqsa mosque away from the eyes of the Israeli army which had imposed a ban on all Palestinians from entering Jerusalem on the day (Reuters photo)

Amman meeting to focus on securing engineering industrial base for Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — One of the key avenues for Jordan to build its economic base and achieve self-reliance is by developing a manufacturing industry through a systematic approach that takes into consideration the typical features of the Kingdom and based on the experience of other countries. This is expected to be the key theme for a conference to be held at the University of Jordan Sept. 2-5 bringing together businessmen, officials and foreign experts.

Professor Bhinder, one of the organisers on behalf of the Royal Scientific Society, said the focus of the conference would be the engineering industry.

Jordan, like any other emerging country, should concentrate on "widespread industrialisation in order to increase employment opportunities for their peoples and thus raise their living standards," said Prof. Bhinder, who spent 25 years teaching engineering research at a British university.

"For emerging nations industrialisation with particular emphasis on engineering manufacturing industries is a necessity and not a luxury," said a background coordinator of the conference, which is organised by the Jordan Exports Development Chamber of Industry, the Jordan Exports Development Corporation and the Industrial Development Bank.

"Since Jordan has no known reserves of oil within its boundaries, developing engineering manufacturing industries is a dire necessity," it said.

"It must be emphasised that industrialisation cannot happen by itself," it said. "Emerging nations need practical help and guidance from industrial nations. However, helping the emerging nations should be seen not simply as a charitable act but as a vital step towards eradicating global depression which has been plaguing the world for some time."

Expected to attend the Amman meeting are senior officials from the ministries of planning, industry and trade, higher education and finance as well as foreign experts who will present the experiences of the countries like Malaysia, Taiwan, Indonesia etc. in building their engineering manufacturing industries. Papers presented at the conference will tackle issues such as the development of human resources, the requirements of infrastructure and the overall economic environment in terms of the climate for investment.

Jordan is well-placed to develop an engineering industry, but it needs a carefully-charts approach takes into account what is presently available in the Kingdom and how it could raise itself to being conducive to industrialisation in terms of infrastructure and other factors, said Prof. Bhinder, a British national of Indian origin.

"But it is not a difficult process as long as there is determination on the part of the decision-makers," said Prof. Bhinder.

The primary purpose of this conference is to invite speakers from (Far Eastern) countries in order to provide a forum for well-focused discussions of issues facing the emerging nations," said the circular on the conference.

According to Prof. Bhinder, the offers that Jordan received during last October's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit need to be given "renewing" and this week's conference is a "step" towards that goal.

book — and I held the Koran."

The U.S. Treasury Department on Wednesday denied Mr. Farrakhan's application to receive either the \$250,000 bonorarium that goes with the award or the \$1 billion that Colonel Qadhafi had pledged to the Nation of Islam after meeting Mr. Farrakhan last January.

The treasury said Libya had been on Washington's list of states that sponsor international terrorism since December 1979, and noted Libya had refused to turn over two Libyan suspects in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. That refusal led to the imposition of U.N. sanctions on Libya.

Mr. Farrakhan organised last October's Million Man March in the United States that brought thousands of black Americans to Washington for a peaceful rally.

Farrakhan says he is a revolutionary without a gun

TRIPOLI (R) — Controversial U.S. Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, in Libya to receive an award worth \$250,000, described himself here on Thursday as a revolutionary, but disavowed the use of violence.

Mr. Farrakhan was due to accept in a ceremony on Friday evening the Muhammad Qadhafi Human Rights Award that Libya is presenting this year to the African-American people.

He gave a news conference on Thursday evening, excerpts of which were later shown on Libyan television.

Describing a meeting earlier with Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, Mr. Farrakhan said: "I told brother Qadhafi that I, too, am a revolutionary, but I will not make a revolution with the gun. I told him that I will produce in America a change of heart and a change of mind with this

international terrorism since December 1979, and noted Libya had refused to turn over two Libyan suspects in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. That refusal led to the imposition of U.N. sanctions on Libya.

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Yemen, S. Arabia sign cooperation accord

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen and Saudi Arabia have signed an economic cooperation accord aimed at increasing joint trade and investment, officials said Friday.

The agreement was hammered out in talks here late Thursday between Yemeni officials and a Saudi delegation led by Defence Minister Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz.

The agreement between Yemen, one of the world's poorest countries, and Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer, is the latest step towards a normalisation of ties disrupted after Riyadh accused Sanaa of supporting the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

After the invasion Saudi Arabia immediately suspended its financial aid to Yemen and expelled around 850,000 Yemeni workers.

Officials said talks carried on late into the night over sticking points on customs tariffs and the classification of industrial products.

Prince Sultan also met with Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh late Thursday for the third time since his arrival on Wednesday, officials said.

Speaking to journalists after the meeting with Prince Sultan, Mr. Saleh said his visit to Yemen "would have a positive impact on relations between the two countries."

Officials said the two men discussed the meeting of the high joint committee chaired by Prince Sultan and Yemeni Parliament Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar, and ways to breathe new life into joint working groups.

The high committee comprises five working groups set up to monitor an agreement in principle signed between the countries in February 1995 in the Holy City of Mecca.

Under the agreement Yemen abandoned its claim to the border provinces of Najran, Assir and Jizane which came under Riyadh's authority in 1934 following a war.

The working groups were set up to demarcate the long border and tackle security and other issues.

In June last year, the Yemeni president made his first visit to Saudi Arabia since Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Yemen is counting on Saudi Arabia to ease economic difficulties which worsened during its 1994 north-south civil war.

Prince Sultan, who last visited Yemen in 1988, was accompanied on his trip to Yemen by Interior Minister Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz and Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal.

The Saudi defence minister on Friday left Sanaa for the southwestern Yemeni town of Ta'ez, and was due to return to Saudi Arabia later the same day.

37% Egyptians support ban on female circumcision

CAIRO (AFP) — Thirty-seven per cent of Egyptians support the Health Ministry's decision to ban female "circumcisions" in public hospitals while 32 per cent oppose it, according to a poll published here Thursday by a government newspaper.

Thirty-one per cent of those polled by the newspaper Al Gomhouriya said they had no opinion on the decision, announced in mid-July by Health Minister Ismail Salama.

The daily polled 800 people from nine provinces, including urban areas such as Cairo and impoverished rural regions such as Assuit in the south, after a 14-year-old girl died earlier this month during a circumcision.

The clitoris and sometimes the labia are removed in the procedure, a common practice in Africa.

Amina Abu Ala bled profusely and died minutes after a doctor operated on her in their home at her father's request.

Her death triggered a wave of condemnations of the operation, with the Egyptian Human Rights Organisation branding it "an ugly crime" and urging the authorities to ban female genital mutilation.

The doctor, Rabin Ibrahim Mahgub, was arrested following the girl's death and accused of negligence after he admitted he had given her a tranquilliser rather than a full anaesthetic. The human-rights group has estimated that nearly 3,600 girls, both Muslims and Coptic Christians, undergo circumcisions each day in Egypt. According to the Health Ministry, the practice dates back thousands of years in Egypt and daughters of 98 per cent of rural families and 70 per cent of urban families undergo the operation.

Fifty-nine per cent of those polled said they had subjected their daughters to a circumcision while 32 per cent said they had not and nine per cent did not respond.

Turkey moves to lift state of emergency in southeast

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey's parliament has approved a series of laws effectively aimed at lifting a nine-year state of emergency imposed on several Kurdish-majority southeastern provinces.

The laws, which were drawn up by Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's Islamic-led coalition government and approved by parliament late Thursday, are aimed at preparing local authorities for a possible lift of the state of emergency.

These laws affect 10 provinces in southeastern Turkey, where fighting between Turkish troops and the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) led to the setting up of an state of emergency in 1987. Earlier this year the Turkish premier pledged in his government programme to gradually lift the state of emergency.

The new laws give local police chiefs more scope to apply "anti-terrorist" measures in their region and they can even call for cross-border military operations.

They also authorise police and military forces to open fire "directly and without hesitation" on those who "attempt to resist with arms" during anti-terrorist sweeps.

Mr. Erbakan's government has not said in which provinces the emergency laws will be lifted, but the Turkish press has said the move will affect those regions not bordering Iraq and Iran.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel. 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
15:05	Cartoon — Moomin
15:25	Pumpkin Patch
15:50	Drama — Blue Heelers
16:30	Comedy — Big Brother Like
17:00	News Flash
17:02	Sciences Cartoon
17:15	La Vie Devant Moi
17:30	Pyramid
18:00	Serie — Police Des
19:00	Le Journal
19:15	Fait Pas Rever
19:30	News Headlines
19:35	Comedy — The Torkles
20:00	The Album Show
20:45	Drama — Miami Vice
21:30	Prism
22:00	News in English
22:25	The Bold and the Beautiful
23:15	Feature Film "Big Bus"
PRAYER TIMES	
04:44	Fajr
06:05	(Sunrise) Doha
12:36	Dhuhr
16:13	Asr
19:07	Maghreb
20:28	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetfeth. Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661656	
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
Anglican Church Tel. 652826	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457	
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295	
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology:	
Relative hot weather conditions will prevail with temperatures above average by 2-3 degrees centigrade and winds northerly to northwesterly moderate.	
In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate to active and seas calm.	
Min/Max temp.	
Amman	21/34
Aqaba	27/39
Deserts	20/38
Jordan Valley	25/39
Yesterday's high temperatures:	
Amman 32, Aqaba 38 Humidity readings: Amman 30 per cent, Aqaba 27 per cent.	

NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Walid Al Masri	675485
Dr. Khalil Abdo	732920
Dr. Yousef Rashid	896301
Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab	758848
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdows pharmacy	623672
Al Asena pharmacy	637055
Nairozkh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeisani pharmacy	637660
Najib pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh	250080
Al Quds pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Walid Halaseh	982799
Khalifeh pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue	630341
Rescue Police 192	621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	617101
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800

PRICE COMPLAINTS	
Water and Sewerage Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	773111
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200	
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200	
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Husseini Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn	642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mallhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	607071
Shmeisani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Muasher Hospital	667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali	666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	

ARRIVALS (RW)	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights	
07:00	Dubai (add) (RJ)
07:30	Dubai (add) (RJ)
08:00	Damascus (add) (RJ)
10:20	Beirut (RJ)
10:30	New Delhi (RJ)
10:30	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
11:00	Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ)
11:00	Colombo (RJ)
13:40	Sarajevo, Sofia (add) (RJ)
15:10	Istanbul (RJ)
15:45	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:10	Riyadh (add) (RJ)
19:00	Cairo (RJ)
19:15	London, Berlin (RJ)
20:40	Vienna (RJ)
23:30	Madrid (add) (RJ)
02:50	Madrid (RJ)
05:10	Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
05:30	Bangkok (RJ)
Other Flights	
03:00	Rome (AZ)
13:40	Muscat, Doha (GF)
14:00	Riyadh (SV)
15:00	Vienna (OS)
19:35	Amsterdam (KL)
20:35	Cairo (MS)
20:50	Damascus, Paris (AF)
21:10	Beirut (ME)
21:15	London (BA)
22:00	Sanaa (IY)
22:35	Lamaca (CY)
23:55	London (KJ)
03:00	Kuwait (KL)
03:00	Rome (AZ)
03:30	Antalia (TK)
06:30	Tel Aviv (LY)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights	
09:50	Aqaba (QAIA) — proceeds to Marka airport at 10:00 a.m.

DEPARTURES (RW)	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights	
06:35	Beirut (RJ)
09:45	Istanbul (RJ)
11:00	Madrid (add) (RJ)
12:00	Vienna (RJ)
12:00	Riyadh (add) (RJ)
12:30	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:30	Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:00	Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:10	Paris (RJ)
13:15	Brussels, Amsterdam (RJ)
14:05	London (RJ)
15:10	Cairo (RJ)
21:10	Lamaca (RJ)
21:10	Doha, Kuel Lumpur (add) (RJ)
21:20	Jeddah (RJ)
21:45	Bahrain (RJ)
22:00	Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
22:30	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
00:15	Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
00:30	Al Ain (add) (RJ)
Other Flights	
04:00	Athens (DA)
04:00	Rome (AZ)
08:45	Beirut (ME)
14:30	Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (CF)
15:30	Riyadh (SV)
16:00	Vienna (OS)
20:45	Kuwait (KL)
21:20	Cairo (MS)
23:00	Sanaa (IY)
23:30	Lamaca (CY)
23:55	Paris, Damascus (AF)
04:00	Amsterdam (KL)
04:00	Rome (AZ)
06:40	Antalia (TK)
07:25	Tel Aviv (LY)

HJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Royal Wings (RW) Flights	
20:30	Aqaba (RW)
Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday	
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday	
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday	
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday	
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in fils per kg	
Apple	700/500
Banana	600/600
Banana (mulhammar)	520/520
Banana (imported)	850/800
Carrot	160/90
Cauliflower	400/250
Cucumber (large)	240/200
Cucumber (small)	420/250
Eggplant	220/150
Fig	340/200
Garlic	650/400
Grapes	400/250
Lemon	520/300
Marrow (large)	250/200
Marrow (small)	450/200
Mulukhiyah	110/90
Onion (dry)	150/100
Okra	800/400
Pea	580/300
Peach	850/500
Pepper (hot)	340/200
Pepper (sweet)	460/200
Potato	350/200
Spring Bean	850/400
Sweet melon	350/200
Tomato	130/100
Water melon	200/100



Her Majesty Queen Noor, accompanied by Mayor of Amman Mamdouh Abbadi and Senator Leila Sharaf, inspects the final stages of construction of City Hall as delineated on a master plan (Petra photo)

Queen tours construction of City Hall, home renovations

AMMAN (J.T.) — Over the past two years, the Municipality of Amman has embarked upon a master plan to revitalise the old city centre, whose nucleus is "Sahat Al Muhajireen" in Ras Al 'Ein.

The development plan of the sabat, which is in the shape of a crescent measuring around 40 dunums, includes the building of a City Hall, a mosque, a convention centre, a national museum and library as well as a public park and gardens.

Her Majesty Queen Noor, accompanied by the Mayor of Amman, Mamdouh

Abbadi, Thursday toured the City Hall, which is in the final stages of construction, and reviewed its progress as delineated on the master plan.

Queen Noor also inspected Al Zahra' school, considered the capital's oldest educational institution.

The second site she toured is one of Amman's oldest houses and once the home of HRH Prince Nayef Ben Abdullah Ben Al Hussein; it is located above the Roman Amphitheatre, overlooking Raghada Palace and the Hashemite Court.

According to Dr. Abbadi, the municipality has re-

posessed and restored several of Amman's historic buildings in accordance with "Queen Noor's directives to preserve sites that have played a key role in the legacy of the city and its development," a Royal Court statement said.

Dr. Abbadi added that the Queen had "promised the transformation of these national monuments into tourist and cultural landmarks."

Senator Leila Sharaf accompanied Queen Noor on her visit.

Tourist venues to come under scrutiny — ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities today launches a large-scale inspection campaign covering various tourist facilities including hotels, restaurants and rest houses, according to a ministry source.

A team of experienced ministry officials will lead inspection visits to tourist facilities in Jordan to ensure adherence to official price rates, the source added.

The ministry resolved to take action, the source said, based on increasing numbers of complaints that some establishments were hiking prices, deliberately ignoring approved rates.

The ministry will adopt strict measures to halt distortion of bed and board prices at hotels and rest houses as well as that of meal prices at tourist restaurants, the source confirmed.

Ministry offers to aid job seekers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Labour has issued an appeal that unemployed Jordanians register with the ministry's employment offices in the various governorates so that they may be aided in their job search.

Director of the ministry's employment office Bahjat Qteishat was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Friday as saying the employment offices have secured employment for 5,260 Jordanians this year up through July from a total of 8,159 job applicants.

In the same period the employment offices also issued work permits to 14,285 job-seeking immi-

grants mainly in bakeries, restaurants, and the cleaning and agricultural fields, Mr. Qteishat said.

In 1995 the Ministry of Labour issued a total of 94,333 work permits to foreign immigrants, the majority of whom were Egyptian and accounted for 85.3 per cent of the total foreign workers in the country, and were mainly employed in the agricultural and service sectors, according to Mr. Qteishat.

Mr. Qteishat stated that his office is strictly abiding by last month's decisions passed by a ministerial committee which prohibit the employment of non-Jordanians in 15 areas and also

restrict foreign labourers' employment to that unwanted by Jordanians.

These occupations fall into the following categories: medical, engineering, accountancy, clerical, telephone exchange, warehouses, hairdressing, decor, educational, gas stations, electric, auto mechanical, driving, night watchmen, salesmen and office messengers.

Minister of Labour Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh said earlier this month that guest workers now estimated at 300,000, up from 250,000 in 1995, should strictly follow these regulations and must acquire work permits prior to their arrival in the

country and subsequently report their place of residence upon the start of their work.

The minister was also quoted as saying that many of the foreigners living in the country have been caught without the necessary work permits and that at least 30,000 of them are unemployed but stay in direct violation of these regulations.

Minister of Interior Awad Khleifat said that strict measures will be taken against those found to violate these laws including possible expulsion, forfeiting any right to re-entry.

Telecommunication conference to discuss inter-Arab cooperation

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Minister of Post and Communications Jamal Sarairoh Sunday will inaugurate the international "Arab States Telecommunication Finance Colloquium" which is scheduled to take place at the Forte Grand Hotel.

The three-day forum was organised by the Geneva-based International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and will be hosted by the Jordan's Telecommunication Corporation (TCC).

According to a statement sent to the Jordan Times Friday, the participants will review several reports covering the following topics:

- The current investment climate,
- New investment opportunities for financing telecommunication projects in Arab countries,
- The present situation of development in the telecommunication sector and its reorganisation in various Arab countries,
- Partnership between telecommunication departments and the private sector,

•The exchange of international, regional and national expertise among participating countries in the field of communication.

A financial draft policy scheduled to be presented to the regional conference will also be discussed during the forum.

It is dedicated to the promotion of telecommunication in the Arab region. The forum will also be attended by officials of the ITU.



Jamal Sarairoh

Ministry clears one wheat shipment, will inspect second

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Supply has cleared one consignment of Indian wheat and expects to inspect a second one amid charges that the shipment is infected, sources said Thursday.

They said the ministry had moved around 20,000 tonnes of Indian wheat from a ship docked at Aqaba to silos where the shipment was fumigated as part of a treatment which is routinely given to all grain shipments.

The second shipment, of around the same quantity, is slated to be examined early this week, according to the source.

While both shipments originated in India, two different suppliers and contractors are involved. The first consignment was bought at \$191.50 per tonne while the second cost \$200 per tonne.

The international price of wheat is around \$210 per tonne.

"The second consignment will also be cleared as soon as the quality of the wheat

is established and a mechanism is set for its fumigation," a source was quoted as saying.

According to the source, the fumigation could be implemented within the ship or in the silos. But in the first case, the ship will have to remain in port for an additional three days, meaning that extra charges will have to be paid for as stipulated in the contract.

The sources rejected charges that the second consignment, arranged by a Swiss-based company through a local Jordanian agent, was sent to Jordan after the governments of Yemen and Mozambique rejected it. "The shipment came directly to Aqaba from an Indian port," said the source. "All documents related to the shipment indicate clearly that from the very beginning its original destination was given as Aqaba," according to the source.

Other sources said the shipment was made in a few days after the order was finalised and confirmed, and the price offered was relatively low because the consignment was ready for

loading when its original buyer opted to cancel the order for unknown reasons. "As such, it was easy for the seller to load the shipment immediately and expedite the order and thus also avoid losses because of the cancellation of the order," said another source.

There was no immediate explanation as to why the charge was raised that the shipment was infected and that it was rejected by Yemen and Mozambique.

India, which sold more than 300,000 tonnes of wheat to Jordan in 1991, recently started exporting wheat to Jordan after a three-year hiatus prompted by a shortage of the commodity in India and then fears linked to a plague there.

According to Ministry of Supply sources, the specifications of Indian wheat match those laid down by the Jordanian authorities and the ministry might consider establishing long-term arrangements with Indian suppliers provided the quality and specifications would be maintained throughout.

Jordanians report on hijacking ordeal, describe hijackers as 'tense, scared'

By Rana Hussein Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Amneeb Awad Hamdan was sitting near the left wing of Sudan Airways on her way from Khartoum to Amman, thinking of the doctorate discussion which led to her degree in Sudan, and of her family who was anxiously awaiting her return, when her reverie was abruptly interrupted by the scream of a cabin attendant.

Dr. Hamdan looked back and saw a man holding the woman at knife-point. The man announced that the plane was hijacked.

This was the beginning of the terrifying voyage of Flight 150 which was commandeered late Monday, Aug. 25, minutes after take-off.

Dr. Hamdan was one of the 186 passengers and 13 crew members on board the Airbus A-310 who endured the 22-hour drama seized by the constant fear of being blown up.

"I was really frightened and felt that my heart was going to stop beating at any moment," Dr. Hamdan said.

The security personnel on board the jetliner struggled with the hijacker, said Dr. Hamdan and soon after another man declared that he had explosives and would detonate the plane if security officers did not

release his accomplice.

"We were pleading with security to leave the hijackers alone after they threatened to explode the plane," she told the Jordan Times Thursday shortly after arriving at Queen Alia International Airport.

Mahmoud Rifai, a freelance journalist, was also a passenger aboard the flight and said that although the hijacker assured the passengers that no harm would befall them and that the sole purpose of the hijacking was to seek political asylum, they were acting in an agitated manner.

The hijacker was claiming that he was holding explosives, looked tense, scared and ready to blow up the plane, but assured us that he would not do anything as long as we stayed calm," said Mr. Rifai, one of the 15 Jordanians who returned to the Kingdom Thursday.

The plane stopped in Larnaca Airport for refuelling before taking off to London where the hijackers were intending to seek political asylum.

The hijackers had originally wanted to land at Heathrow Airport, but the flight was diverted to Stansted, 45 kilometres northeast of the capital, where more than 500 security units including bomb disposal factions, armed agents and negotiating



Three of the 15 Jordanian returnees attend a welcoming reception upon their arrival at Queen Alia International Airport. The 15 were trapped in a 22-hour ordeal aboard a hijacked Sudanese aircraft (Photo by Rana Hussein)

teams were deployed to face the crisis.

Mr. Rifai, who interviewed the hijackers during the flight, stated they were not hostile and that "it was only a humanitarian cause" [for them], adding that "their group leader, called Mohammad, told me that they had families seven months back, and that they harboured no intentions of hurting anyone, that simply they were fleeing the regime of Iraqi President

Saddam Hussein."

The tragedy of the hijacked plane ended peacefully at Stansted airport in London Tuesday at noon, when the hijackers gave themselves up following a nine-hour stand-off.

Security at Stansted airport only found dummy explosives and knives on board the airplane.

British newspapers Wednesday reported that the seven hijackers were under police investigation and that their families, who

accompanied them on board, were being held in accordance with British immigration laws.

Earlier reports suggested that the hijackers and their families held diplomatic passports which entitled them to board the plane without official inspection. But Iraqi officials Wednesday denied these reports and any link between the Iraqi embassy in Khartoum and the hijacking operation.

WHAT'S GOING ON

LECTURE

***The Anthropology of Suffering** by Professor John Davis at the World Affairs Council, Jabal Amman (Tel. 618051/2).

SCIENCE WEEK

*Fourth annual science week at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman at 9:00 a.m.

FOLKLORE DANCES

*Folklore dances by the Circassian Folkloric Troupe at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

*Works at Batoul Al Fakiki at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 687596), until Sept. 11.

*Abstract (plastic) art by Hussein

Da'seh and Nader Samarah on Jerusalem at the Orfati Art Gallery, Umm Utheina (Tel. 826932), until Aug. 31.

*Works by artist Abeer Abu Joodih at Alla Art Gallery, Jabal Amman, until Sept. 5.

*Abstract (plastic) art by Lina Hiani entitled "Relationship Between Man and Nature" at the Housing Bank complex gallery, until Aug. 31.

**Summer '96" exhibition at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Oct. 8.

POETRY RECITAL

*Recital of poems by Iraqi poet Mohammad Al Dhabban (on women's liberation and education) at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:30 p.m.

RJ ready to privatise

AMMAN (Petra) — Vice President of Administrative and Procurement Affairs for Royal Jordanian (RJ) Zuhair Dahman Thursday

said the government's plans to privatise the airline will help the national carrier rid itself of time-consuming bureaucracy.

In a lecture delivered at the RJ Cultural Centre, Mr. Dahman quoted a statistic of 70-85 per cent of the airline's passengers as being non-Jordanians.

He asserted that although RJ is making profits, it still struggles with debt settlements and debt servicing quoting a JD 100 million

loss as the result of closure of the Baghdad and Kuwait routes in 1990, following the Gulf War.

Mr. Dahman calculated RJ assets as exceeding JD 482 million, adding that its worldwide work force comprises 5,500 people, including technical and administrative staff.

Referring to a report prepared by a special committee in charge of examining the airline's situation in preparation for its impending privatisation, Dr. Dahman said the report has concluded that RJ's structure is solid and boasts a firm foundation.

Engineering conference to open soon

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) near Ramtha will organise the Jordanian Chemical Engineering Conference on Sept. 2 under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

The conference is expected to be attended by experts from the private and public sectors, according to an announcement issued Friday by Tayseer Khedawi, dean of the university's engineering department.

Among the expected participants will be chemical engineers and other specialists employed in the chemical, teaching, research and development fields, said Dr. Khedawi.

He added that the reports to be presented to the conference, which is to span three days, are expected to cover a range of subjects among them: chemical engineering technology, water and environment engineering, bio-technology, electrochemical engineering, chemical fertilisers,

petrochemicals, fuel and energy as well as the chemical industry in general.

Dr. Khedawi said that preparatory committees have already embarked on the final preparations for the conference which is the second such event to be organised by JUST.

He said simultaneous to the conference, the university will organise an exhibition displaying samples of various Jordanian chemical industrial products.

Clinton embarks on bid for second term

CHICAGO (R) — President Bill Clinton embarked Friday on a quest to become the first Democrat to win a second term since Franklin Roosevelt 60 years ago, but party leaders worried his chances could be hurt by a sex scandal that forced his chief campaign strategist to resign.

As he took command of the Democratic convention Thursday night to deliver his nomination acceptance speech, a smiling, happy Clinton showed no public sign of worry about the resignation of political guru Dick Morris after a tabloid newspaper alleged he had a year-long relationship with a \$200-an-hour hooker.

The president delivered a 66-minute speech that seemed to have a proposal every paragraph, from tax credits to lifting up "the poor and end their isolation, their exile."

The speech signalled the start of a 68-day campaign against Republican rival Bob Dole and independent Ross Perot that Mr. Clinton promised would be a battle of ideas not invective.

Accompanied by first lady Hillary Clinton, Vice-President Al Gore and his wife Tipper, the president was expected to leave Chicago Friday for Missouri where he will start a two-day bus tour of four key states.



President Bill Clinton and his daughter Chelsea Clinton are shown in a crowd, smiling and waving. They are surrounded by people and confetti, suggesting a celebratory event.

Mr. Gore and Mr. Clinton did a similar trip after the 1992 convention and it proved a public relations success.

Reaction to Mr. Clinton's speech was mixed. Some delegates appeared bored, disappointed there were no soaring phrases. One Iowa man even cautioned a

yawning delegate to stop because "the television cameras will catch you."

But the mass of 20,000 delegates cramping Chicago's United Centre were too fired up to complain.

They cheered and shouted "four more years" almost every chance they had, and they appeared in a jubilant mood as they left the convention centre.

But many wondered what the effects of the Morris scandal would be on the campaign and Republican plans to make Mr. Clinton's character a major issue of the election battle.

Republicans, delighted in the scandal, talked Thursday of a man being judged by the company he keeps.

Mr. Morris is credited with reviving the Clinton presidency after it nosedived in the 1994 congressional elections. Voters turned on the president and gave Republicans control of both houses of Congress for the first time in 40 years.

Mr. Morris devised a strategy in which Mr. Clinton moved to the centre and co-opted many Republican plans, while at the same time painting his opponents as mean-spirited extremists.

Mr. Morris arrived at the Democratic National Convention as king of the hill and left in disgrace after the Star tabloid magazine, picked up by the New York Post, reported he told the call girl Clinton administration secrets during their

affair and even let her listen to him while he talked to the president.

Sen. Dole told ABC News he thought the Morris scandal would affect the campaign.

"The problem is it raises the integrity issue," said one White House aide worried that although Mr. Clinton could hardly be blamed for someone else's peccadillo, it would remind people he has had a host of "character" problems of his own in the past.

Mr. Clinton issued a statement expressing regret at the departure of Mr. Morris, whom he described as his friend and a superb political strategist. Beyond that, Mr. Clinton handled the crisis by ignoring it — and his speech contained a passage suggesting others ought to be decent enough to do so as well.

He said it would be fair game in this campaign to compare records with Sen. Dole, his running mate Jack Kemp and third-party challenger Ross Perot but added:

"I will not attack them personally or permit others to do it in this party if I can prevent it ... This must be a campaign of ideas, not a campaign of insults. The American people deserve it."

Former New York Governor Mario Cuomo praised Mr. Clinton's address, saying, "I have never seen him better in delivering a speech. He was completely in control. He was flawless."

Senator Edward Kennedy declared that Mr. Clinton had "taken up the fallen standard" of his late brother, President John F. Kennedy.

The Democratic National Convention ended late Thursday with a traditional deluge of confetti and red-white-and-blue balloons, after President Clinton and Vice-President Gore accepted their nomination for a second term in office.

More than 4,200 delegates and guests waving "Clinton-Gore 96" banners and U.S. flags, fired up by Mr. Clinton's acceptance speech in which he promised to "build a bridge to the 21st century," chanted "four more years."

Mr. Gore thanked the delegates, his family and the city of Chicago, which in 1968 hosted a much different Democratic convention marred by anti-Vietnam War demonstrations and violence.



President Clinton (right) and Vice-President Al Gore wave to the crowds at the Democratic National Convention Thursday after Mr. Clinton's speech accepting nomination for a second term. Mr. Clinton pledged to lead America boldly into the 21st century (Reuters photo)

Taipei says it would welcome visit by China policymaker

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan said Friday it would be happy to see a visit to Taipei by Wang Zhaoguo, the chief Taiwan affairs policymaker under China's ruling state council, but noted that certain procedures must be followed.

"We would be pleased to see this come about," said spokesman Kao Koon-Lian of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, a policy-making cabinet agency. "But we must apply according to our rules."

"We feel problems facing the both sides of the (Taiwan) Strait should be handled with mutual respect," Mr. Kao told a news conference.

In Beijing, a delegation of Taiwan business leaders invited Mr. Wang to visit Taipei in a private capacity and said that he was accepted, but a Beijing official promptly denied that Mr. Wang had agreed to make the trip.

Mr. Kao cautioned that the approval procedure for a visit by Mr. Wang would depend on what kind of status he would like to have, saying approvals for lectures or other non-official visits were different from

those for political negotiations.

If Mr. Wang hoped to come for negotiations, Mr. Kao said, Taiwan would prefer that talks begun in the early 1990s but stalled in mid-1995 be restarted first.

Talks between quasi-official representatives of China's Communist government and Taiwan's rival Nationalist government ground to a halt in June 1995 amid Beijing's fury over a private U.S. visit by Taiwan's President Lee Teng-Hui.

"The most urgent thing at the moment is to resume Koo-Wang talks because that was where we stopped," Mr. Kao said, referring to contacts between Taipei's top negotiator Koo Chen-Fu and his Beijing counterpart Wang Daohuan.

The 80-member Taiwan business delegation, led by tycoon Kao Ching-Yuan, arrived in Beijing Tuesday. Taiwan economic officials have joined the delegation in a private capacity.

Chinese Communist Party chief and President Jiang Zemin met members of the delegation Thursday and

tried to reassure the visitors, saying Beijing would not allow political differences to stand in the way of trade and investment.

The Taiwan council's Kao said Mr. Jiang's ideas were "very practical."

On Wednesday, Mr. Kao Ching-Yuan urged Beijing to resume talks with Taiwan, saying the island's investors would lose confidence in China if political friction impeded ties.

Beijing has viewed Taiwan as a rebel province since the Nationalist government lost a civil war to the Communists and fled to the island in 1949. Beijing insists Taiwan is not entitled to official links with other states.

China has stepped up pressure on the island to lift a decades-old ban on direct trade and transport links with Taiwan.

On Aug. 20, Beijing unilaterally announced a set of regulations to pave the way for direct shipping links.

Taiwan has banned direct trade, transport and mail links since 1949. Indirect trade and investment has been allowed since the late 1980s, usually through Hong Kong.

India's 'super cop' gets bail in bottom-slapping case

NEW DELHI (AFP) — An Indian court has given bail to the country's most famous police chief after he was sentenced to three months' hard labour for slapping a woman's bottom. Newspapers said Friday, District and Sessions Judge Amar Dutta Thursday suspended the jail sentence banded to Kanwar Pal Singh Gill on charges of "outraging the modesty" of a woman bureaucrat eight years ago. The original sentence, given by a lower court on Aug. 7 after Chief Gill was found guilty of slapping Rupan Deo Bajaj's bottom at a party, stunned many but left feminist groups elated. Judge Dutta, based in the northern city of Chandigarh, said the prison term would be suspended until he heard Chief Gill's appeal. He ordered Chief Gill, now retired, to appear before the court. Chief Gill won accolades for crushing a bloody Sikh separatist drive in the state of Punjab and is popularly known as "super cop." Ms. Bajaj filed a police complaint after failing to secure an apology from Chief Gill, who publicly dismissed the episode in July 1988 as "trivial."

U.S. nude dancers vote on joining a union

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Nude dancers at a San Francisco club voted Thursday on whether to become the only "exotic dancers" in the nation to belong to a union. Ninety-seven employees of the Lusty Lady Club in San Francisco's North Beach district were eligible to take part in the national labour relations board election on union representation. Union officials said, if a majority votes to join local 790 of the Service Employees International Union in a secret ballot being held Thursday and Friday, the club's nude dancers would be the only ones in the United States to belong to a union. Strippers at a San Diego club set up an open union shop several years ago, but it is no longer unionised. Union officials said, "The workers approached us. We had discussions with them. They formed their own committee. We supported them by filing a petition with the labour board." Jim Philiou, organising director with local 790, told Reuters. He said club management opposed the union drive. Managers could not be reached for comment on Thursday.

Bag-toting monkeys terrorise farmers

TOKYO (R) — Gangs of bag-toting wild monkeys with a taste for apples have become a scourge of farmers in Tokyo's western suburbs, city officials said Friday. "Troops of monkeys somehow picked up this habit of feeding on apples after one of them raided an orchard full of young trees last year," said Hiroaki Okawa of the Hachioji Agricultural Promotion Department. "Some monkeys were seen last month carrying apples away in plastic shopping bags," Mr. Okawa told Reuters. Tokyo's western hills are home to an estimated 100 wild Japanese monkeys who have always raided farms for potatoes and carrots, but had not been known to go after apples, he said. The only effective way to scare off the marauding monkeys from their gourmet apple feasts has been to explode fireworks and play tapes of the sound of gun shots. "Many hunters won't shoot monkeys because they have this superstitious fear of killing them," Mr. Okawa said. Japan's animistic Shinto religion regards monkeys as sacred messengers of the gods. Farmers in the area have asked authorities to help end the apple feasts.

Dole urges Clinton not to back Bosnia elections

SAN LUIS OBISPO, California (Agencies) — Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole has urged President Bill Clinton to postpone the presidential and parliamentary elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina next month, calling them a sham.

"I believe that putting American prestige behind such a process only serves to undermine our leadership and makes a mockery of our commitment to democratic principles, while making it more difficult for U.S. troops in Bosnia to accomplish their goals," Sen. Dole wrote Mr. Clinton in a letter released by his campaign.

The upcoming election in Bosnia is scheduled for Sept. 14. Sen. Dole cited "widespread intimidation of opposition leaders" as one reason the U.S. government should not be backing the elections.

He said other problems included refugees not being able to return to their homes.

"These elections are a sham in the making. They should be postponed until conditions exist that will ensure that the voting will be free and fair," the Dole letter said.

Also Thursday, Sen. Dole promised that, if elected, his administration would usher in a return to the tax-

cutting era of the Reagan administration.

"The Reagan tax cuts were like a super-charger for the economy," Sen. Dole told a crowd of several thousand at a Spanish-style old mission building here.

Sen. Dole has been campaigning on a plank to cut taxes 15 percent.

The mention of former President Ronald Reagan brought a round of cheers from the California audience. "We believe you can spend your own money more wisely than any government ever will. We can balance the budget and cut taxes. It can be done," Sen. Dole said.

Asked about the surprise resignation of Mr. Clinton's high-level strategist Dick Morris, Sen. Dole, speaking in Santa Barbara, said: "Morris has been trying to make President Clinton a Republican, now maybe he'll revert to the liberal democrat that he (Clinton) really is."

Sen. Dole later told ABC's Barbara Walters the resignation could "change the direction of the campaign," noting that liberals had not been too happy with Mr. Morris's assessment that Mr. Clinton had to move to the centre to win the election.

The Morris resignation followed a published report

that Morris had spent time with a prostitute whom he allowed to listen in when Mr. Morris spoke on the telephone with the president.

When speaking privately to a campaign worker about Mr. Morris, apparently not realising a radio microphone nearby was live, Sen. Dole said: "It says something about who you surround yourself with, doesn't it?"

But publicly, Dole aides went to considerable efforts to not be seen taking advantage of the Morris story, which is sure to refocus attention on Mr. Clinton's character.

"He (Dole) takes the long view of this sort of stuff and I think it's fair to say he feels some degree of sympathy for someone to be thrust into the national spotlight with this sort of scandal," said Sen. Dole's Press Secretary Nelson Warfield.

Sen. Dole chided President Clinton for stealing his ideas, as outlined in his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

"I'm afraid to leave my speeches lying around, I'm afraid he'll grab them and go out and give them," Sen. Dole told the crowd of boisterous republican faithfuls in this town 256 kilometres northwest of Los

Angeles.

"Everything I'm for, he's for," the 73-year-old candidate said, repeating a longstanding criticism by Republicans.

Among other measures outlined in his hour-long speech in Chicago, Mr. Clinton promised tax breaks for property owners and for parents with children in university, a more moderate version of Sen. Dole's recent proposal for a capital gains tax break.

Mr. Clinton also promised to develop a cost-effective national missile defence system, shadowing a Republican plan, and vowed to pursue a clampdown on teenage smoking, apparently in response to Republican criticism that teenage drug addiction has increased during his watch.

Sen. Dole dug into Mr. Clinton here by blaming his administration for silently tolerating drug use and said a return to the "just say no" philosophy of former Republican President Reagan was needed.

Casting the Nov. 5 election as one of competing philosophies, Sen. Dole said: "The key is very, very simple. They trust the government and we trust you ... We trust the people of the United States of America."

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Wreckage of a Vnukovo Airlines Tupolev 154 airliner lies in the snow on the Arctic island of Spitzbergen. The airliner, carrying Russian coal miners, crashed in bad weather some 10 kilometres from the island's only airfield of Longyearbyen. All 141 passengers and crew were killed in the disaster (Renter photo)

Arctic weather hampers Russian plane recovery

LONGYEAR, Norway (R) — Fog and low cloud prevented rescue workers Friday from starting the grim task of pulling bodies from a wrecked Russian airliner that crashed into a snow-capped mountain in the Arctic.

The plane, carrying coalminers from Moscow to the remote Arctic island of Spitzbergen, crashed as it came in to land Thursday. All those on board, 129 passengers and 12 crew, were killed. Most were from Ukraine.

Norwegian rescue workers and investigators met in Longyear, the island's main town, to discuss the difficult work ahead. The wreckage is on a mountain some seven kilometres east of Longyear.

Officials said continued low cloud and fog had prevented helicopters starting recovery operations. The weather forecast predicted rain, fog and snow for the day.

Investigators do not yet know whether the plane flew off course or whether it simply came in too low. Visibility was poor and the weather was bad when the plane hit the mountain just after 10 a.m. (0800 GMT) Thursday.

Norwegian officials are hoping to recover the plane's flight data recorders from the crash site.

"We are trying to establish what happened as soon as possible," said Elisabeth Aarsaether, spokeswoman for the island's governor.

The Tupolev TU-154 was bringing miners and members of their families to work in a Russian open-cast mine. Spitzbergen is governed by Norway but Russia has rights of access under an international treaty from the 1920s.

The accident stunned the tiny Russian and Norwegian mining communities. Fewer than 3,000 people live on Spitzbergen, which has one of the world's harshest climates and lies some 500 miles (800 kilometres) off the northern tip of Norway.

"It is hard to lose people with whom one has worked," Russian Consul Vladimir Nosyov told Norwegian Television.

Rescue teams had to abandon efforts to recover bodies and examine the wreckage less than six hours after Thursday's crash, because of thick fog and freezing winds.

Norwegian officials said there was also a risk of avalanches and possible danger from polar bears which roam Spitzbergen freely. Last year, bears killed two people on the island and few people venture out unarmed beyond the main settlements.

Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland said the worst air disaster in Norway's history was "a great tragedy."

There are no roads leading to the snowbound crash site. Photographs released by the Norwegian authorities showed a smashed fuselage and pieces of the airliner's tail section which had slid down the mountainside after the three-engine plane crashed and broke up.

In one photograph, a body could be seen in the foreground, partly covered by wreckage. Once recovered, the bodies will be flown to the northern Norwegian city of Tromsø.

Air traffic control lost contact with the flight shortly before it was scheduled to land. The pilot had not reported any problems during his approach.

Western aviation experts have raised questions about the safety of Russian airline operations following the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. But the pilot was experienced and the plane had been in service for only eight years.

Yevgeny Buzny, an official of the Russian mining company which chartered the plane, said there were seven children and 40 women on the plane.

The miners were on their way to start work in the Russian towns of Barentsburg and Pyramiden — relieving more than 100 colleagues and their families who were already waiting at Longyear Airport to fly home on the same plane.

Many of the Russians waiting to leave spent the night in Longyear's church and the local priest organised a sombre breakfast for them Friday.

Stig Kristiansen, a shopowner in Longyear, said some of those waiting to leave had come into his shop just before Thursday's accident.

"They were smiling," he told Norwegian Television. "Then, half an hour later, they were crushed."



Philippine government chief negotiator Manuel Yan (right), Indonesian President Suharto (2nd right), Nur Misuari (2nd left) chief of Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and Indonesian foreign Minister Ali Alatas hold hands after the initialing an accord Friday to end a 24 year bloody conflict in the southern Philippines which has cost more than 125,000 lives. The peace agreement will be formally signed by Philippine President Fidel Ramos and Mr. Misuari in Manila Monday (Reuter photo)

Philippine negotiators initial peace accord

JAKARTA (R) — Philippine peace negotiators initialled an historic agreement Friday to end a bloody Muslim-Christian confrontation in the south of the country dating back centuries.

Government chief negotiator Manuel Yan and Nur Misuari, Chairman of the Muslim Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), initialled the accord witnessed by Indonesian President Suharto at Jakarta's Freedom Palace.

The peace agreement will be formally signed by Philippine President Fidel Ramos and Mr. Misuari in Manila Monday.

The accord is aimed specifically at ending a 24-year Muslim separatist revolt which has cost at least 125,000 lives.

Some five million Muslims regard the southern island of Mindanao as their ancestral homeland, although they are now out-

numbered three-to-one by Christian migrants. Tensions between the two religious groups go back four centuries to the arrival of the first Christians in the area.

Extremists on both sides have condemned the peace accord, but Mr. Misuari — stressing that it was for all the people — said he would work to persuade opponents to accept it.

The agreement will establish an interim Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD), to be followed in three years by a plebiscite leading to autonomous rule in the 14-province region.

Mr. Misuari acknowledged at a Friday news conference he faced a "big problem" in getting his guerrilla followers — which he has said numbered well over 30,000 — out of the bush.

"I know it is a matter of explaining to them the wis-

Lebed takes peace plan to Chechenya

MOSCOW (R) — Alexander Lebed, the Kremlin security chief, flew to Chechenya Friday for new talks with separatist leaders with an outline of a framework document on how to define its future status, Interfax News Agency said.

ITAR-TASS news agency said that before his departure Gen. Lebed, whom President Boris Yeltsin has given sweeping but unclear powers to settle the Chechen conflict, had spoken by telephone to the Kremlin chief, who is on holiday outside Moscow.

The presidential press service could not confirm that the conversation took place and had no information about the activity of Mr. Yeltsin Friday.

Interfax quoted Gen. Lebed's press secretary as saying he aimed at reaching "sweeping agreements" at the current stage of talks but adding that the rebels might need some time to consider Moscow's proposals.

The spokesman gave no details of the draft plan but said it dealt with political aspects of the conflict — the most sensitive issue in the 20-month-old war.

Interfax said Gen. Lebed's trip would last one day and he would fly first to the capital of the neighbouring region of Dagestan and then move to the separatist region by helicopter.

Gen. Lebed, 46, broke off talks on a political settlement last weekend with rebel Chief-of-Staff Aslan Maskhadov, saying he had to return to Moscow to iron out legal questions and cover his back against unnamed opponents within the Russian establishment.

Since his return, he has been unable to get a meeting with Mr. Yeltsin, who took off on holiday Monday near Moscow.

Kremlin spokesmen say Mr. Yeltsin, 65, who asked for written details of Gen. Lebed's proposals Tuesday, is keeping in touch with his envoy without needing to speak to him. They deny rumours that the president is ill but say he needs to rest.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin held a meeting with Gen. Lebed and top officials including the defence, interior and justice ministers and the head of the FSB security service.

In an apparent setback, Interfax quoted a spokesman for Mr. Chernomyrdin as saying Thursday:

"Alexander Lebed's plan of action...in Chechenya needs a lot of work."

Gen. Lebed arranged an ambitious ceasefire last week shortly after Mr. Yeltsin made him his personal envoy to Chechenya.

"The war has been stopped. Now we have to create the conditions so that it does not resume," Gen.

Lebed said Thursday. The truce Gen. Lebed brokered has held so far, putting an end to a spate of fierce fighting which began on Aug. 6 when rebel fighters seized much of the capital, Grozny.

Both sides have pulled forces out of some areas and Russian and rebel fighters are jointly patrolling parts of Grozny.

TASS said president of the self-styled Republic of Ichkeria Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev might take part in Friday's talks.

Interfax said Mr. Yandarbiyev had Thursday met Tim Guldinmann, the Swiss diplomat who heads the Chechenya mission of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Few details of Gen. Lebed's proposed settlement have emerged. It must find a compromise between the referendum the separatists want, which they think would back outright secession, and Moscow's refusal to countenance full independence.

Both sides indicate they might agree on a vote in some years' time, once the north Caucasus has recovered from the war.

Gen. Lebed failed to win the green light for his Chechenya peace plan Thursday at a ministerial meeting.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's spokesman Viktor Komnov said the

draft plan "needs serious improvement," Interfax reported.

Mr. Komnov also said that Mr. Chernomyrdin was "extremely worried" by what he said were ceasefire violations by the Chechen rebels, in particular their furnishing of local administrations and alleged attacks on members of the Russian-installed local authorities.

The daily Moskovsky Komsomolets said Mr. Yeltsin had also received a report from Moscow-installed Chechen leader Doku Zavgayev, who has accused Gen. Lebed of committing a "crime against the state" by negotiating with the rebels.

The rebels have been fighting for independence since December 1994, in a war that has cost more than 40,000 lives, mostly civilians.

Later Friday, Interfax quoted Mr. Chernomyrdin as saying Friday that President Yeltsin had backed Gen. Lebed's peace plan for Chechenya.

Mr. Chernomyrdin said he had had a lengthy telephone conversation on Thursday with Mr. Yeltsin. "Lebed is now in Chechenya solving some problems," Mr. Chernomyrdin said. "The main thing is his programme. It was agreed with Boris Nikolayevich (Yeltsin) yesterday."

10 killed, 30 missing in Malaysia landslide

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — A mudslide set off by floods swept away an entire aborigine village in Northern Malaysia, killing at least 10 people and leaving 30 missing, Bernama news agency reported Friday.

"Mud and water came crashing down so fast and washed away all the houses downstream," said one survivor.

The agency quoted survivors as saying they heard a sound like a loud explosion before mud and water crashed down on the Pos Dipang aborigine settlement at Kampar town in Northern Perak state Thursday evening.

Police said 21 aborigine homes and another house belonging to an ethnic Chinese family were found along the banks of a river near the settlement, Bernama reported.

The landslide was apparently caused by floods, police said.

Heavy rain has fallen over peninsula Malaysia in the past few weeks.

Police said the dead had lived in houses built on a hill slope which were washed into the river.

The Aborigine Affairs Department said it was uncertain of the exact number of casualties. But a spokesman quoted by Bernama said more than 30 people were missing.

"We're not sure if they've all been washed away," said the spokesman.

A rescue team drawn from police, fire fighters and civil defence staff was "racing against time" searching for survivors, Bernama said.

The bodies of three children, five women and two men were recovered Friday. All were found downstream from Pos Dipang after being apparently swept away by the torrent of mud.

Quoting a police spokesman from Kampar, Bernama said nine people were injured and were being treated in hospital.

Initial reports from the national news agency had said up to 50 people may have been killed.

Belgian police search home, abroad for victims; suspect's wife admits role

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Belgian police have flown to the Czech Republic in the hope of finding two teenage girls alive a year after they were abducted by the chief suspect in a child sex ring, the Le Soir daily reported Thursday.

Meanwhile police resumed their search of a house owned by the suspect, Marc Dutroux, four days after he reportedly told them five children could be buried there, including the two missing girls.

In another development, the paper said his common-law wife Michele Martin had told police she was responsible for feeding two of his young victims who were left to starve to death after being abducted and abused.

Ms. Martin had earlier claimed to have had nothing to do with the abduction of eight-year-olds Julie Lejeune and Melissa Russo, whose emaciated corpses were found at Sars-La-Buissiere at one of several homes owned by Dutroux.

Le Soir said the six officers went to the Czech Republic, and in particular to sex clubs in Bohemia, to look into Dutroux's reported activities there.

The paedophile network in Belgium, of which Le Soir is alleged to have been a key member, was reported to have connections in Germany and the Czech Republic.

The dig at the house in Jumez, a working-class quarter of the southern city of Charleroi, was suspended late Thursday amid heavy rain. No bodies have been found so far.

At least six girls fell into the hands of the network. Two of them, Julie and Melissa, were abducted in June last year and died of hunger around March 1996.

Another two were found alive in August at another Dutroux house, while the final two are An Marcal and Eefje Lambreks, 17 and 19 respectively who disappeared in August last year.

It is An and Eefje whom police believe may be in the Czech Republic, if they are not already dead.

In the light of Mr. Dutroux's statements to police, investigators have gathered dossiers on 12 children reported missing in Belgium over the past 10 years in case they may also have fallen prey to the child sex ring.

According to Le Soir, Ms. Martin's involvement was exposed by FBI scientists who were called in to assist Belgian police.

Le Soir said Ms. Martin had admitted that she was charged with feeding Julie and Melissa by Dutroux, who has previous convictions for abducting, imprisoning and raping children.

He had earlier claimed to have ordered an accomplice, Bernard Weinstein, to feed the girls while he was in prison for theft from December to March.

Mr. Dutroux, 40, who has already been charged with six counts of kidnapping, has reportedly confessed to murdering Weinstein, whose body was found next to those of the two girls two weeks ago.

According to Le Soir, Ms. Martin said Mr. Dutroux had told her Weinstein had buried the girls in the garden of the Jumez house. Le Soir said Mr. Dutroux had confirmed most of her version.

Meanwhile, a senior police detective is due to be formally charged in connection with the scandal.

Georges Zicot, a chief police detective in the southern city of Charleroi, was arrested Sunday. He faces charges of car theft, insurance fraud and forgery.

Three other people also face charges in connection with the car theft ring uncovered by police investigating the paedophile sex gang.

Mr. Dutroux has been linked to organised vehicle theft and police are investigating the child sex and theft ring together.

At the same time the Belgian cabinet in its first meeting since the summer break is to adopt tougher rules on the early release from prison of convicted sex offenders.

Recovery expedition brings slab of Titanic's hull to surface

NEW YORK (R) — A recovery expedition lifted a giant slab of the RMS Titanic's hull from its watery ocean grave Thursday, 84 years after the ship struck an iceberg in the North Atlantic Ocean, an expedition spokesman said.

The 20-tonne piece of steel hull was hovering at the water's surface, still attached to several diesel-filled bags that were used to raise it from the ocean floor, said Todd Tarantino, spokesman for New York-based RMS Titanic Inc., which is sponsoring the expedition.

Recovery crews hoped to move the bulk from the water to recovery ship Jim Kilabuck, anchored off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada, later Thursday, he said.

"They're moving very slowly," he said. Plans call for the piece of debris to be taken to Boston Saturday and to New York City Sunday. The wreckage has been lying in water more than three kilometres deep.

The steel-hulled Titanic, thought to be unsinkable, struck an iceberg on April 14,

1912, and sank, killing 1,523 of the 2,200 passengers and crew on board. The wreck was located in 1985.

The expedition tried unsuccessfully twice earlier this week to retrieve the hull but technical hitches and equipment problems delayed them.

As part of the recovery expedition, more than 1,700 people including three survivors of the doomed liner's first Trans-Atlantic voyage sailed in two ships from Boston and New York to the site, paying \$1,500 and up for a nine-day cruise.

RMS Titanic, which holds the rights to the ship's debris, has recovered some 4,000 artifacts since 1987. It hopes to use the hull section as the centrepiece of an exhibition next spring and possibly a full-fledged Titanic museum.

The U.S.-based Discovery Channel on cable television, NBC Television Network and Britain's Channel Four all plan to release documentaries about the recovery mission.

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Ambiguity solves no problems

PRIME MINISTER Abdul Karim Kabariti's visit to Ramallah Thursday for talks with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat came at a time when a serious deadlock threatened the future of peace negotiations on the Israeli-Palestinian track. In response to the dramatic escalation in tensions between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Jordan felt compelled to move since none of the parties involved in the peace process could afford a new intifada or derailment of the essential negotiating track. Following the talks between Mr. Kabariti and Mr. Arafat, which culminated in the exchange of messages between His Majesty King Hussein and the Palestinian president, the Jordanian leadership made its position crystal clear. The situation in the occupied territories and self-rule areas was alarming and two steps had to be taken at once: expressing solidarity and support for the Palestinian side at such difficult time as this, and contacting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to counsel him on the need to reconsider his policies on settlements, Jerusalem and otherwise. The phone call by His Majesty to Mr. Netanyahu appears to have succeeded in impressing on the prime minister the necessity of restarting peace negotiations immediately and reaffirming commitment and respect for what had already been agreed upon with the Palestinians.

On these two, intertwined counts, Jordan could not be accused of ambiguity. Prime Minister Kabariti stated unequivocally at the conclusion of his talks with President Arafat that Amman rejects all efforts to justify any new expansionist policy by Israel, since it would undermine all efforts and basis for a just and comprehensive peace in the region. Just as it is well-known that going back on peace accords would take all of us backward, perhaps to square one.

It is still too early to tell whether the Netanyahu government is now serious about broadening and deepening the fresh contacts that it has had with the Palestinian side in the wake of the strike that was fully observed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip Wednesday. It will be dangerous if the latest Israeli move turns out to be meant only to defuse momentary tensions. Has not the pursuit of peace become a central plank in the Israeli policy programme, as it indeed has become to the Arab side's? Does the Likud party, and its partners in the coalition government, have an alternative to the peace option? If so, let us hear it from them. Procrastination and ambiguity solve no problems.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER FOR Al Ra'i daily reflected on the resolutions passed by the Cairo Arab summit expressing the view that decisions concerning the Arab Nation's dealings with Israel have not been implemented, thus encouraging the Israeli prime minister to pursue his aggressive policies and continue to build Jewish settlements on the Arab lands. Tayseer Al Zibri said that more than two months have elapsed since the convening of that summit meeting where the Arab leaders condemned Israel's policies and its Jewish settlement programmes. In that summit, the Arabs declared that their normalisation process with the Jewish state will be linked to progress in the peace process and Israel's compliance with the requirements of a comprehensive settlement based on the exchange of land for peace, noted the writer. He said that while Syrian mediation efforts helped to defuse the tension between Iran and its Gulf Arab neighbours as demanded by the summit, the Arabs have failed to halt Benjamin Netanyahu's repression of the Palestinian people, his disregard of the Oslo agreements and his determination to build settlements in the occupied Palestinian lands. The writer said that obviously the Arab countries are not doing enough to stem the Israeli danger and it is hoped that the Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo in September will find a formula that will deal more effectively with this situation.

A WRITER FOR Al Doustour expressed the view that Jordan should conduct a re-examination of its external and domestic policies in the course of addressing the numerous problems facing its people. It is not enough for the government to pass legislation concerning taxation and investments but it should also show keenness on securing comfortable situation on the domestic scene so as to promote confidence and bring reassurance to the public about the future, said Taher Al Adwan. The writer noted that the Jordanian economy is closely linked to the country's political stand and vice versa, adding that failure of the economy is reflected heavily on politics. When the peace treaty with Israel was signed, the people of Jordan expected dividends and benefits that would do away with poverty, unemployment and economic ills, but it turned out that Israel imposed further restrictions aimed at separating the Palestinian self-rule areas from Jordan and harrasing the entry of Jordanian goods to Palestine or Israel, according to the writer. As a consequence, he said, the Jordanian economy was badly affected and the public largely remain dismayed and dissatisfied with the general political and economic situation. The writer said that only a political decision can help stimulate the economy and address the country's economic ills.

Jordanian Perspective

Netanyahu risks more than anti-Israel violence

By Dr. Musa Keilani

THE DEVELOPMENTS in the Palestinian territories, including the call for mass prayers at Al Aqsa on Friday and the strike that was staged on Thursday are clear indications of the deep frustrations that the Palestinians feel over the course of their peace negotiations with Israel. Nearly three years after signing the landmark Oslo accords, the only thing that the Palestinians have to show for themselves is the limited autonomy that they have in the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank. If anything, the employment opportunities that the Palestinians had in Israel before the Oslo accords are also now being denied to them.

The Palestinians are also getting increasingly convinced that the headline Israeli government led by right-winger Benjamin Netanyahu is bent upon following the same policy as the previous Likud government of Yitzhak Shamir to keep them dangling in the peace process without actually giving them anything.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's compliance with Mr. Netanyahu's insistence that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) close all offices linked to it in Arab East Jerusalem is understandable if only because he has no choice at this point in time. But it has sent a strong signal to the Palestinians that regardless of the international support they enjoy in their claims to East Arab Jerusalem, Israel will refuse to accept the Palestinian rights to the Holy City.

Coupled with that is the stepped-up Israeli activity in settlement building in the West Bank. Mr. Netanyahu prefers to call it "construction to accommodate the natural growth of communities," but he is fooling nobody. How could anyone overlook the fact that the very existence of Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories is illegal? As such, Mr. Netanyahu is adding insult to injury by insisting that the building of new schools, hospitals, sports facilities, etc. in the settlements should be

acceptable to the Palestinians.

Judging by the carefully "leaked" reports carried in the Israeli press, it becomes abundantly clear that the Netanyahu government has a grand plan of annexing every inch of the West Bank while shrouding the annexation in what the Jewish state sees as internationally acceptable arrangements that essentially mean simple autonomy for the Palestinians in the West Bank.

The Israeli measures, statements, declarations, preconditions, demands and insistence vis-a-vis the Palestinian track of negotiations send a very clear message: Mr. Netanyahu has no intention of meeting any of the very basic requirements for peace that would mean Israel relinquishing the Palestinian territories and accepting the political rights of the Palestinian people.

So where do the Palestinians go from here? Mr. Arafat appeared to have been hoping against hope that despite all rhetoric, Mr. Netanyahu would gradually accept the realism that there can be no peace without meeting the Palestinians' legitimate demands for their rights and come around to resuming the peace negotiations along those lines.

But as the recent developments clearly proved, the conclusion is quite to the contrary.

That clearly shuts out all enthusiasm that was generated when the Arabs and Israelis sat down under an international umbrella held by the U.S. and the then Soviet Union in Madrid in 1991.

By the same token, the international community shoulders the responsibility of ensuring that the legitimate Palestinian demands are honoured. One of the key factors that nudged the Palestinians into opening peace talks with Israel under clearly unfavourable conditions that the implicit and explicit guarantees that the world would step in if and where the Palestinians fail in their quest to regain their rights. The international communi-

ty could argue that it was the choice of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to enter the Oslo accords with Israel, but it cannot ignore that the Oslo agreements were indeed met with equal enthusiasm from all over the world. In fact, the October 1993 conference in Washington where the donor community pledged over \$2 billion to help the Palestinians was another reaffirmation of the international support for the Palestinians.

But today, the Palestinians are left with only a handful of genuine friends, including Jordan, which has been and is trying hard to convince the Israeli government to accept the reality that it could not continue on the course it is following and that it should live up to the commitments it undertook under the Oslo accords despite the change of political leadership in the Jewish state.

In his arguments vis-a-vis peace talks with Syria, Mr. Netanyahu asserts that there is no guarantee that a successor to the present leadership in Damascus would honour any accord reached with the Jewish state over the Golan Heights.

Well, we can understand that argument if only because Mr. Netanyahu himself offers the best example of how any government could simply refuse to honour agreements reached by its predecessor.

By maintaining his hardline policies, Mr. Netanyahu is grooming frustration-fuelled extremism among the Palestinians. What Mr. Netanyahu is risking is more anti-Israeli violence that does not bode well at all for the entire Middle East peace process or for the very security of Israelis that the Likud leader seems to hold high whenever he mentions the world peace.

'Netanyahu can by no means impose his will on the Arab Nation'

THE LOCAL press gave prominence to the developments in the occupied Arab territories in the light of Israel's hardline stands with regard to the Jewish settlements and the resumption of peace talks with the Palestinians. The aftermath of the riots in the south and domestic affairs also featured high in the press articles.

In discussing the new Israeli government's aggressive policies against the Arabs, a writer for Al Ra'i said that Beeyamin Netanyahu can by no means impose his will on the Arab Nation despite his military power and can by no means stifle the spirit of resistance to occupation in the occupied Arab lands. Mu'nes Razzaz said even if Netanyahu uses nuclear weapons to devastate Arab capitals, the spirit of resistance will persist. Citing the examples of Vietnam which defeated the Americans in the war and Japan which was devastated in World War II, the writer said these nations have risen again after destruction, something that will happen to the Arab Nation which is currently subjected to humiliation by its enemies but whose spirit remains alive.

The worsening of the situation in the occupied Palestinian lands came about as a result of Israel's announcement of plans to build more settlements, plans that have been on the minds of the Israelis since Netanyahu came to power at the head of a Likud-led government in Israel, said Mohammad Kawasb in Al Doustour. The writer said that the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular realise too well that Netanyahu's government is intent on ruining the peace process because it is determined to keep its control of the lands it occupied in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and to disregard the Oslo agreements. The Israeli announcement about the resumption of the settlements programme was the last straw that brought the matters to a head, he added. The writer said that the explosive situation in the whole region should prompt the Arab states and the sponsors of the peace process to take immediate measures to deal with the situation.

Mohammad Kharoub, a writer for Al Ra'i daily, reflected on the prospects of the resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations saying that the situation in the whole region has worsened in the absence of real progress towards an end to Israel's occupation of Arab



lands. The Palestinian people are driven to despair not only due to the lack of any progress towards the implementation of the Oslo agreements and the redeployment of Israeli forces in Hebron, but mainly due to Israel's decision to resume its settlement building programmes on Arab territories, said the writer. The worsening of the situation was also brought about in the light of Israel's refusal to withdraw from the Syrian Golan Heights and its offer of "Lebanon First" formula to deal with Lebanon and clinch a separate deal with the Lebanese government. The writer said that Israel's behaviour is bound to create an explosive situation in the whole region and there is more need now than ever for the resumption of the peace negotiations and a halt to Israel's provocative measures.

A writer for Al Doustour commented on remarks by Israeli Premier Netanyahu on board a visiting U.S. aircraft carrier when he said that the U.S.-Israeli strategic power protects Israel's peace. Taher Al Adwan said that Netanyahu's remarks which reflect his arrogance and the Jewish state's determination to pursue aggression on the Arabs can by no means help Israel to enjoy genuine peace. There is no doubt that the Arab people now fully realise Israel's aims and ambitious designs which reflect the Jewish state's real image as an aggressive power backed by the United States in its drive to subdue the Arab Nation, said the writer. He said that the present leaders of Israel include army commanders who took part in wars on the Arabs and who truly represent the evil nature of Israel.

Abdullah Al Khatib, a writer for Al Doustour, strongly criticised the Palestine National Authority (PNA) for persecuting the opposition groups in the Palestinian self-rule areas and for the ill-treatment of detainees in Palestinian jails. He said foreign countries have been deploring the PNA's actions against its adversaries, for the torture of the detainees and for restricting the freedom of the Palestinians in general. Organisations like Amnesty International and the International Committee of the Red Cross have condemned the inhuman treat-

ment of the detainees which in one case resulted in the death of at least one Palestinian youth, he noted. The writer said that while the PNA brags about human rights and demands from Israel to respect the rights of the Palestinian people, it is committing atrocities against the Palestinian detainees and committing crimes against humanity.

Discussing the situation in Jordan in the wake of the rioting in the southern parts of the country Sultan Al Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i, said now that the dust has settled, there is dire need for a resumption of dialogue between the government and the various political groups. The writer said that the government ought to follow in the footsteps of His Majesty the King who met with the former prime ministers to bear their views about the situation and discuss future measures to control the situation and remove causes of tension. Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti who was present at the meeting with the King must have benefited from the experience and ought to copy this step and initiate contacts with the various political groups, trade unions and other representatives of various public sectors in order to work out a clear policy that would guarantee the development process in a peaceful manner.

Discussing the situation in the southern towns following the rioting, a writer for Al Ra'i said that there was urgent need for the local inhabitants to join forces with the concerned authorities to reconstruct and rehabilitate the social, educational and economic institutions to help them resume their services. Nazih said that schools, mother and child care centres, electricity networks and other facilities and installations await reconstruction and restoration for the benefit of the local communities. While deploring acts of sabotage one can only hope that the damaged institutions be helped to resume their valuable services to the public and by denouncing the destruction of property one can hope that the responsible citizens will now mobilise their forces to resume the march of progress and development.

The sunshine boys arrive

Dole and Kemp talk about American 'leadership, but don't be irritated

By Michael Elliott

THE WEATHER helped. San Diego's convention centre may be a pale imitation of the Sydney Opera House, and the harbour view may be ruined by an unlovely flyover, but the southern California city has (as its boosters never tire of saying) the best climate in the United States. So if the going at the Republican convention recently got a bit soporific (it did, often) you could always pop outside for a few rays and a glass of Chardonnay by the waterfront. We will assume it was the sun, rather than the X-rated movie theatres close by, that got the GOP delegates into such a mood.

The sun — and, of course, the proceedings at the convention itself. Delegates were buoyed by the choice of Jack Kemp as Bob Dole's running mate for the November elections. For many Republican activists, Kemp is like the wayward early boyfriend whose kiss a happily married woman can never quite forget. Enthusiastic, upbeat, optimistic, his surprising selection was the perfect way to inspire the party faithful. And, arriving in San Diego with their nominee trailing Bill Clinton by around 20 points in the opinion polls, Republicans needed some inspiring. Then followed four days of carefully modulated proceedings, from which all trace of controversy had been removed; a moving celebration of Ronald Reagan, suffering from Alzheimer's disease up the coast, and finally, a speech by Dole himself of which this at least could be said — even those who didn't like it had to admit that it was the most eloquent he had ever given.

At first blush, Dole and Kemp look like an odd couple. Dole, from the stern plains of Kansas, taciturn, and a man who sees and practices politics solely in terms of process; Kemp, raised in the ram-bunctious Los Angeles of Raymond Chandler, logorhelic, obsessed to the point of self-parody with "ideas." In fact, they have much in common: for all their talk of roots in an America where the fields of the republic roll on endlessly, both, in truth, are Washingtonians. But for

foreign observers of this year's dance toward the November election, two other matters bind them together. And were the Republican ticket to triumph, both would turn out to be of the first importance.

First, both men are internationalists. The isolationist wing of the Republican Party, typified by Pat Buchanan, who had some early successes in the primary season, was hardly evident to the San Diego. Sure, the party platform has some United Nations-bashing nonsense and in his acceptance speech Dole couldn't resist taking a swipe at both U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali and the World Trade Organisation (which supposedly infringes "national sovereignty"). But the two Republicans trotted out to talk about foreign policy at the convention were ex-secretary of state James Baker and ex-U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, both widely known and admired outside the United States. Between 1992 and 1995, Dole more than any other Washington figure advocated American engagement in the effort for a solution to the Bosnian war — a brave and principled stand that brought him no political gain. Kemp has a long history of informed commitment both to free trade and to the economic development of those countries that have emerged from the shadow of communism.

Naturally, the internationalist instincts of both men will be tempered by domestic political constituencies that seek to limit American engagement abroad. But in all truth, there is nothing new in that.

Protected by two wide oceans, bordered only by a benign Canada and a historically backward Mexico, many Americans have always felt that geography allowed them to avoid foreign entanglements. If foreign leaders don't understand by now that such a view has always been a part of the American mind-set and always will be, they deserve little sympathy.

The second aspect that binds Dole and Kemp is more subtle. Both men rejoice in their use of the phrase "American leadership," both are convinced

that the United States has a unique vocation among the nations to inspire and lead the world, or, as Kemp put it in his acceptance speech: "Today, more than ever before, America's ideals and ideas grip the imaginations of women and men in every corner of the globe." It's easy to pick holes in that statement. For one thing, globes don't have corners; for another, grumbles, or worse, about American political and cultural hegemony are just as common outside the United States as is an admiration for America's boundless energy. Listen, for example, to the not-unjustified complaints of Europeans that the extraterritorial applications of U.S. laws against trading with Iran or Cuba are both counterproductive and offensive.

Nonetheless, there are some noteworthy features to the claim for American leadership. For one thing, the United States has the clout to make its interests stick. It is not alone in thinking that it has a special place on the planet — so, for example, does France, perhaps even Russia. But only the United States has the economic and military power to make its views count anywhere. In practice, however, the domestic political constituency tempers the more arrogant American claims to shape the world according to its own interests. For thoughtless, promiscuous engagement by an administration in the affairs of other nations rapidly runs into obstacles back home: is a Congress that controls the purse strings, and a populace that doesn't see why its boys should be put a risk far away. In practice, a Republican administration — and that's not a far-fetched thought — would practice the sort of "contingent leadership" perfected by George Bush during the Gulf war: that is to say, America will accept the burden of a leadership so long as it knows in advance that it will not be alone, that others will follow. Forget the often irritating rhetoric; that's not a bad recipe for ensuring stability — in every corner of the globe.

The Newsweek

Internet revamps image of Egyptian cafe

By Miral Fahmy
Reuters

CAIRO — For years cafes in Cairo meant thick scented hookah smoke and tinkling glasses of sugary mint tea. This year some coffee-houses have shed their traditional image to become a cairene sign of the times.

There's no backgammon and Egyptian ballads here — patrons at Cairo's two cyber-cafes surf, hang out and chill to the latest pop tunes on compact disc.

The Internet, not the crowd, is the main attraction and coffee is not a mere shouted order but a perculator away.

"What prompted us to open a cybercafe was the frequent questions of people as to where they can go to access the Internet," said Dr Mona Al Kaddah, vice president of Internet Egypt, the private firm which runs the cafes.

"It's a place where people can use the net, meet and share experiences, give each other ideas and of course socialise through the Internet scene," she added.

Local and foreign students, academics and businessmen are among the many web surfers who throng to the computer screens at the cybercafes, one in the city centre and one at a shopping mall in a posh suburb.

"I can have an E-mail account or access from the house but I prefer to come here," said Mohammed Abdul Rahman, a university student who comes to the cafe regularly.

"I can come here and have a coffee, meet my friends, play with the computer and not

only get information but I can have fun too," he added. "For 10 pounds (\$3) an hour, it's cheaper than shooting pool."

Young patrons crowd around downloaded Music Television (MTV) videos and sports news while others exchange greetings over the sound of Nirvana and the occasional Mozart. Others relax in the reading room overlooking the Nile.

"I've been to cafes in the States and Holland, and the computing facilities in this place are definitely tops," said American Keith Braddon, who ran into the cybercafe while on holiday in Egypt.

Three years ago the government, in association with the foreign relations coordination unit of the Supreme Council of Universities, put Egypt online and now estimates there are more than 200,000 Internet users among its 60 million people.

Access via a leased line costs 15,000 to 20,000 pounds a year but users can surf the information superhighway for rates of around 1,000 pounds a year through a dial-up number.

And unlike in other Middle East countries where governments restrict usage, anyone with a computer and an international phone line can access absolutely anything on the internet — a fact which has brought jitters to Egypt's conservative society.

"Security and morality on the Internet are worldwide issues for discussion. We cannot ban such a major information source just because misuse happens everywhere," said Dr. Tarek Kamel of the state's Regional Information

Technology and Software Engineering Centre (risec). Although the state is promoting the Internet as its latest tool for economic, tourist and social development, the media has capitalised on its smuttier side.

Stories of teenagers downloading pornography and paedophilia in other countries and tampering with files of the defence and justice ministries make the front page of Egypt's newspapers. Local technology advances are buried deep inside.

"What about the video and the satellite dish?" Kaddah tells the Internet's opponents.

"We try hard to guide the young people towards constructive information resources at our cybercafes and we make them sign a code of ethics when they join us so that they are aware of what things are acceptable to our society and what things are not. Until now, we haven't had any problems," she added.

Their buzzing cybercafes have prompted Internet Egypt, one of 14 firms selling Internet services in Egypt, to think of opening more sites in Cairo and nationwide. Other companies are also planning to jump on the bandwagon.

But users tend to come from the upper to upper middle income bracket, a minority among Egypt's teeming population. Most Egyptians remain loyal to their waterpipes.

"I've got my traditional cafe with my drinks and hookahs where I go to relax. Why would I ever go to a cybercafe, work on a computer and use my brain?" said cafe customer Gamal Gadd Al Karim.

Sara Netanyahu accuses leftwingers of attacking her husband through her

By Daphne Barak

WEST JERUSALEM — Just as Israel's ex-prime minister Shimon Peres has said:

"Benjamin Netanyahu has succeeded in uniting all the Arabs!" so has Sara, his third wife, succeeded in uniting all Israelis, and believe me, that is a task no less complicated.

But, after my summer visit in Israel, I was quite amused. There is no party, social gathering, or casual encounter in the street or in a restaurant — where the subject does not come up: "Sarah, my wife," this small-sized woman has managed to create a folklore that places right-wingers and left-wingers, men and women, into a common denominator.

Each story is more colourful than the other, and here are some that have been widely spread throughout the Israeli (and the international) media, since Benjamin Netanyahu came to power, a very short time ago. I am just bringing the stories, as they were published, with no personal opinion.

* The nanny affair: Sarah fired her children's (Avner and Yair) nanny, because she burned the soup. Afterwards she claimed that: "The intelligence services claimed she (the nanny) was a security risk." Intelligence declared the next day, that it was not so, that they had not claimed such a thing.

* The cleanliness affair: In context to the nanny affair, it was later found (with the ex-nanny's help) that Sarah has a compulsion for cleanliness. Like washing the laundry lines before the wash is hung on them...

* The stinginess affair: After it was published that her husband, God save us, does not like paying, it was also published that Sarah herself is particularly stingy. For example: She allowed the nanny the use of only one tomato per day.

* The video affair: It was published that at 2 in the morning — yes, yes, she called on the prime minister's office to send someone to fix their VCR because: "If my son Yair wakes up and he can't watch video, he will drive me crazy..."

* The Miss Universe affair: "I am more beautiful than you... more beautiful than..." (and here the name of an international beauty queen!) — is the message she left in the heat of frustration, on the answering machine of her husband's sexy lover.

* The thousand-dollar suite affair: For a conference on the subject of children's abuse taking place in Stockholm, Sarah, who introduces herself as a "child psychologist" (which is not exact as she has never done her internship), only kindled the gossip about the 10 (!) years it took her to complete her final masters paper, which was not (!!!) written by her on herself. The Israeli media found out that a suite was reserved for her at a cost of \$1,000, plus expensive rooms for her personal spokesman and security men. "And why (the media wondered) her? Why not a professional who specialises in that subject?"

* The mother-of-the-year affair: Sarah had to join her husband on his first official visit to Washington. Even though Hillary was not too excited about it and was touring outside the U.S. at the time of the visit, Sarah brought along her two children and the temporary nannies (due to her firing of the nanny). The media was quick to criticise the blown-up expenses, and produced photographs of an exhausted child (one of the two) being dragged by his mother to some show in America.

* The un-edited footage affair: During Benjamin Netanyahu's first interview on election night, he and Sarah were filmed in their hotel room. Israel TV still enjoys the fruits of that interview, and of the footage that was not edited for broadcasting: Sarah placing her husband's arm around her shoulders, placing her own hand on his knee, and instructing him to put down his cup of coffee "so that we can sit together!" Then, when there is a phone call, she instructs: "No! Put it down... put the telephone aside."

* The horse affair: As a prestigious magazine's project, a photographer was sent to perpetuate Israel's leaders. The meeting was set with Benjamin Netanyahu at a horse-ranch. Sarah surprised the photographer by coming along with her children and by insisting to be in the picture: "We've all come — we'll all be photographed together!" Later, the photographer was further surprised, after giving her a gift, to find these published in the French "Paris-Match" magazine, without any credit or payment to him.

And all these, and many many more, in such a short time... Sarah Ben-Artzi met Benjamin Netanyahu after his second divorce. She was an El-Al flight attendant. She married him about two years later, when she was in the middle of her first pregnancy. A bit of gossip that later brought about vicious commentaries about their wedding, and the reasons for it. Then, poor girl, the "Hot-Cas-ette" affair fell on her. During his campaign for head of the Likud, an unknown called Sarah and said: "Your husband is having an affair with..." (giving the name of an attractive media consultant), and I have taped proof of it...

An enraged Sarah called her husband, he got into a panic, asked that it be "nationally broadcast" on Israeli State TV and confessed to the nation, "I had an extra-marital affair!" In addition, he accused one of his closest people, David Levy (today's foreign minister) of extortion (the tape, the tape). Afterwards — what fun! — it became clear that a tape never existed.

I met her for this interview in a Jerusalem hotel. Sarah — short, in a peach coloured suit, a pearl necklace à la first lady — arrives, makes a big deal of "my security man," and makes all possible mistakes. But I, in a kindly mood, am writing here the dialogue that took place between us, in its pure form, without any additions or commentaries.

But not before I tell you about her insistence in refusing my invitation to get some refreshments (see the stinginess affair) and of my feeling, hand on her merciful heart, that her lack of confidence is shattered by each mistake and slogan, which made me want to help her.

Q. Let's think together. What is a First Lady?

A. It's actually a job that depends on each person. Each woman can give it a substance of her own. With me it's complicated...

Q. Why?

A. Because I'm young, because I'm a mother of small children, I have my own career. That, obviously, affects my public activity. I still have to see how to combine it... I have to accompany the prime minister to functions... Mainly I will try to concentrate on the subject of children. There's almost no organisation in the country that hasn't contacted me and requested that I be at its head!

Q. In any case, as First Lady, what will you adopt? On what will you concentrate?

A. First of all, on raising my own children in the best and most appropriate way. You know, the Israeli media won't... leave us alone, leave them alone...

Q. Does the prime minister share his decisions, his preoccupations with you?

A. We are really partners, we talk a lot. He doesn't tell me national secrets, no.

Q. When is your role model as a First Lady?

A. Each one has her points.

Q. Benjamin Netanyahu used you and the children during the campaign. This was not previously done here in Israel and he was criticised for it.

A. But who knows as well as yourself that it's the American way?

Q. He was criticised for an American campaign!

A. But in America — as you will agree — there are also some good things...

Q. Yes, things that are suitable for America...

A. Yes, but America has such good things, that we could learn from, why not? For us, the family campaign was suitable. It just suited us.

Q. Will you work for the advancement of women's position in Israel?

A. More than that I want to concentrate on the children. I don't want to say too much...

(Sarah — has a problem with women. At the end of the interview she complains that women are not able to accept one another, and "they are jealous!" I point out to her, quietly, that: "My women friends are just as successful as myself and we do accept one another. It's all a matter of self-confidence!" Sarah — clearly — was not convinced.)

Q. You talk about "children". Maybe we can be more specific. What exactly on the subject of children will you work for?

A. I just understand more about children (than other women). It is a general subject which I support. There are many technical problems that stop women from advancing in Israel. For example, the subject of child-care, and I, as is well-known, suffer from it myself — it's not organised. So I am involved, the subject of day-care for children must be improved, so that women can concentrate on their own careers...

Q. Please describe for me "a day in the life of Sara Netanyahu."

A. I don't have a permanent schedule. The prime minister and I have been constantly moving. This is our third move in the last two years, and this move, you know, will not be the last one. (The prime minister's official home in Jerusalem is now being renovated. Meanwhile, the Netanyahu moved to a residence used previously by Shimon Peres). Until now we have lived in a student's flat, really! Only 80 square metres, nobody would believe that the head of the opposition lives that way, and besides that, I'm looking for a nanny...

Q. We'll get to that later!

A. I also dedicate at least one hour a day to answer letters that I receive, to read newspapers. I get so many letters! It is a very busy day...

Q. How do you use your free time?

A. At this point I don't have any — I really don't!

Q. It sounds difficult, do you enjoy it?

A. Enjoy some free time — No! I enjoy doing... the opportunity to meet fascinating people: In Jordan, in the U.S., we have already developed some contacts!

Q. What has made the biggest impression on you

during these last weeks?

A. I visited Schneider Hospital. I left there very impressed!

Q. Why?

A. The 21st century has reached Israel. The machinery, the conditions...

Q. Hillary Clinton once said to me: "Vote for one — get two!" Do you agree with her?

A. Israel is more chauvinistic than America. I didn't actually run, nor was I elected. I obtained a representative position due to the circumstances. Actually I have no functional capacity.

Q. Then what capacity do you have?

A. I have no functional capacity. But there is much empathy from the public. There is admiration from the people. There are warm approaches. They come from private people, but also from organisations. More than 70 associations have approached me.

Q. Sarah, that isn't really the picture that is given by the media...

A. No. But you must know that people don't really buy what the media is selling them. I know, I get letters...

Q. In any case, how do you deal with the media? With the different affairs? The nanny and all the others.

A. We don't acknowledge it, they are just envious.

Q. Envious of you?

A. It also has to do with the left-wing! How does it dare to be on the right and on the left also... They (the left-wingers) are not willing to accept! It's easier to attack the prime minister through me, through the children; everything in the media is cheap — incorrect, full of lies. Look, I've met with some First Ladies... names are not important... (actually Hillary Clinton did not meet her, so the only other one could be Queen Noor?) who had heard reports about the attacks on me. They reached the same conclusion.

Q. Which conclusion?

A. That it's all — jealousy. But we don't pay any attention, we go on, in the end — they'll get used to it!

Q. You mentioned your own career and integrating into your new position.

A. Yes?

Q. About what career are you actually talking about?

A. I am a psychologist. I now have two choices: Either to work in my profession, or to go on working at my doctorate. I don't know if that will work out with security... (no, don't give security details, just write that: "There are security restrictions..."). And it seems to me that due to restrictions the doctorate will be the best option.

Q. Do you remember the exact moment when you knew that your husband had been elected?

A. We went to sleep. We were in a hotel. It happened actually in the middle of the night. I was not surprised; we had travelled that day throughout the country. We felt... we felt the warmth, the love. We knew, even when it was announced that (Shimon) Peres had won — we were not worried, and we went to sleep very relaxed!

Q. What was the first thing that came to your head when you finally knew — "We won!"?

A. I immediately thought: "Does Yair (her small son who took part in the elections and was photographed with his parents) know?" When will he know? I thought of how to team up with him, bring him to Tel Aviv from the kindergarten in Jerusalem. And about the little one, we knew that he wouldn't understand...

Q. When you were a little girl, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A. A teacher, like all my teachers. Only after my army service — I served as psycho-technical tester — did the decision to become a psychologist take hold. You know I was an excellent student in science.

Q. At the university?

A. In high school, I even thought of taking the direction of a science profession. And besides that, I wanted to be a journalist.

Q. What is the worst misconception about you?

A. All! Everything! All those that attack me one-to-one, like yourself. I am much more of a realist than I am represented as being. On the one hand I am pictured as being domineering, a snob. On the other, submissive and obedient. So let them decide! Either one, or the other... I get telegrams from people that have met me, of flight attendants that worked with me once in El-Al. They all roar about what is being done to me.

Q. What will be an accomplishment for you during your husband's cadence?

A. To raise my children as well as possible. It's very difficult... if I can manage to keep the family framework: Vacations, weekends, that people will begin to see the prime minister in a more humane way — that he is also a husband, a father. That they won't attack him for taking a half-hour stroll with his wife and children (was it because the spot was closed to the public while they strolled?) because politically he is doing a lot! He has fantastic aims!

Q. Which?

A. All the breakthroughs for peace...

Q. Do you identify with his political problems?

A. Definitely! These are political problems of people who want peace! Peace with security! The contacts made by my husband with (Hosni) Mubarak, Egypt's president. The contacts I have made with Jordan's Queen...

Q. Significant contacts?

A. Definitely! Also with the Princess (The wife of Crown Prince Hassan).

(Since I didn't feel like arguing with Sarah about the very short visit by Netanyahu to Mubarak, since in any case the intentions are good for him to act as mediator, and the less shorter visit that she and her husband made to Jordan — I didn't continue with the subject and drove towards the end.)

Q. In any case, Sarah, I haven't understood, what will be considered an achievement in your eyes, at the end of four years?

A. If there are in Israel less suffering children. Yes, that will be an achievement.

Q. Please be more specific! Exactly what are you saying?

A. Look, there are many problems in Israel. The creation of non-profit organisations. When I was in Washington, I was taken on a school tour. They do fantastic things. Of course, they have the means. I was very impressed. I was also very impressed — and I must say this! — with my visit to the Schneider Hospital. And if there will be less stigmas! That is a subject — you know? — that Tipper Gore is also interested in!

Q. What was it, Sarah, is photographed with me, still thinking of why people (women!) don't approve of her. She says good-bye. Later on, her spokesman comes back, perspiring, apologising: "We have no money, would you mind?"

Q. What was the first thing that came to your head when you finally knew — "We won!"?

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Israel thwarts Arafat's prayer protest

(Continued from page 1)

Arabs and Muslims."

In the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of East Al Amud, about half a kilometre from the Al Aqsa mosque, Israeli police turned away not only West Bank residents, but also those with Jerusalem identity cards who usually can move freely.

"Find another way. You can't pass through here," a policeman told Associated Press reporter Said Ghazzali, a Jerusalem resident, when he approached the roadblock.

"The turnout was good but the roadblocks prevented inhabitants of entire regions from coming," said Imad Faluji, the only Islamic fundamentalist member of Mr. Arafat's self-rule cabinet.

"We knew this would happen because Israel announced it was going to encircle the city. This is a violation against freedom of worship and a provocation for the Muslim nation," he said.

The multi of Jerusalem, Akremeh Sabri, said that "Israeli terror" kept the number of worshippers way below normal for a Friday. "They turned Jerusalem into an armed camp," he said.

Several other Palestinian leaders also attended the prayers, including Faisal Hussein, the top Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official in Jerusalem, and Mohammed Nashashibi. Mr. Arafat's finance minister, who called Israel's attempt to curb attendance at the prayers "insolent and arrogant."

"What we have seen today is that freedom of worship is not being respected," said Mr. Hussein, who is responsible for Palestinian policy in Jerusalem.

The imam leading prayers at Al Aqsa, the third holiest site in Islam, appealed to Muslims not to give up the battle for Jerusalem or Palestinian rights

despite the hardline policies of the Israeli government.

"We must not be silent in the face of Israeli violations" of past peace agreements, he said. In the Gaza Strip, several dozen Palestinians barred from entering Israel knelt in prayer on green plastic mats along a roadside near the Morag junction at the southern end of the Strip.

Mr. Arafat has cracked down on hardline opponents of his 1993 peace deal with Israel since the last wave of suicide bombings six months ago. He feels angry and frustrated that this and other moves demanded by Israel have been ignored by Mr. Netanyahu, his aides say.

Arafat aide Nabil Abu Rdainah said talks overnight between Netanyahu adviser Dore Gold and top PLO official Mahmoud Abbas made no progress on any issue.

Mr. Gold and Mr. Abbas met in Tel Aviv hours after the Palestinians ended the general strike, the first in the West Bank and Gaza in two years.

"The Israelis are still delaying and dragging their feet on all issues," Mr. Abu Rdainah told Reuters.

"The peace process is still paralysed, the resumption of negotiations in practical terms is frozen and the contacts until now have not led to any results at all," Mr. Abu Rdainah said.

Mr. Netanyahu's office said it would not comment on the talks which followed a first meeting in Jerusalem between the chairmen of the Israeli-Palestinian steering committee which oversees implementation of self-rule agreements.

The steering committee will begin next week to convene on a regular basis, Israeli chairman Dan Shomron said.

On Friday, Mr. Netanyahu announced that he and a small group of cabinet ministers would oversee the peace talks with the Palestinians. High-level contacts between the two

sides were to begin next week, radio reports said.

It was not clear whether a resumption of peace talks will be enough to calm the Palestinians who feel betrayed by Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu has not given any signs that he would soften his hardline positions, including his refusal to negotiate the future of Jerusalem and his support for expanding Jewish settlements.

Mr. Hussein said the Israeli government's policy was "threatening the Palestinians' natural right to live in Jerusalem."

In an interview published Friday in the English-language Jerusalem Post, Mr. Hussein said the government was preventing Palestinian development in Jerusalem while promoting the growth of Jewish communities in the city.

Syria condemned Israel's settlement policy and said Mr. Netanyahu was preparing for war with Arabs.

"Practices of the Israeli government, especially its settlement activities, came to confirm that dealing with this government inflicts the biggest harm on the Arab cause," state-run Damascus Radio said in a commentary.

"When this government insists on stabbing the peace process and tearing it apart, this means that it is preparing for war," the radio said.

The radio urged Arabs to unify their ranks to thwart the policies of the Israeli government.

"Israel could not confront a united Arab stand or usurp their rights because the Arab rights could be regained when they achieve unity and solidarity," Damascus Radio said.

It welcomed the international criticism of Israel's settlement policies but called for practical steps to force the Israeli government to abandon this policy.

70 Palestinian buildings set for destruction

(Continued from page 1)

prayers the next day on Friday, which however did not materialise. Mr. Arafat also protested against the relaunching of settlements in the West Bank by the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has now ordered a resumption of negotiations with the

Palestinians.

On Wednesday, the Israeli army demolished five Palestinian homes near Ramallah.

"The army demolished five houses which had been built without authorisation in an area near Tulkarem under Israeli control," said Peter Lermer, a spokesman for the Israeli military administration in the occupied West

Bank.

Tulkarem, in the northern West Bank, is one of seven West Bank towns administered by the PNA, but Israel maintains control of areas outside the city limits.

Palestinians complain that requests for building permits go unanswered and they have no choice but to build illegally.

AFM price index advances 2%, closes at 142.54 points

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Price rose by more than two per cent at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) last week as stocks were buoyed by a series of economic liberalisation measures announced by the government and expectations that Jordanian companies would benefit from the oil-for-food agreement between Iraq and the United Nations, brokers said Friday.

Contributing to enthusiasm in the market is also indications that the stocks of some of the smaller banks could rise as a result of their acquisition by major banks as all commercial banks in Jordan are moving towards raising their capital to JD 20 million before the end of the year, the brokers said.

The weekly report of the AFM said turnover for the week ending Thursday was 3.5 million dinars compared with the previous week's 2.65 million dinars. It said 2.9 million shares changed hands under 2,645 deals struck during the week, with average daily trading at 700,000 dinars

compared with the previous week's 500,000 dinars.

The official AFM share price index based on 60 major companies closed at 142.54 points, up three points or two per cent from the week's opening of 139.54 points, the report said.

The gains were further translated as 2.7 per cent for commercial banks and financial institutions, 1.19 per cent for industrials and 1.08 per cent for insurance firms. Service sector shares dipped by 0.08 per cent.

Industrials accounted for 1.79 million dinars of the weekly turnover, followed by commercial banks and financial institutions with 1.26 million dinars, service sector firms with 480,000 dinars and insurance companies with 12,000 dinars.

Shares of 90 companies were involved in the week's trading, with 35 of them closing with gains, 34 slipping and 21 remaining unchanged, the AFM report said.

The Pearl Investable Index, maintained by the private sector Pearl Consulting, showed that stocks of commercial banks and financial institutions

gained 2.03 per cent, insurance firms 0.14 per cent and industrials by 0.15 per cent while service sector companies dipped 0.16 per cent.

Pearl's sectoral indices showed a further split up: Commercial banks gained 1.76 per cent, investment banks 0.43 per cent, specialised credit institutions 2.21 per cent and Islamic banks 1.36 per cent.

In the services sector, energy firms gained 0.68 per cent, investment and real estate firms 0.64 per cent. Tourism companies and hotels slipped by 0.29 per cent and transportation firms 0.19 per cent. Shares of companies in the press sector remained unchanged for the week.

In the industrial sector, mining firms gained 1.93 per cent, chemical and petroleum companies shed 0.71 per cent, construction businesses gained 0.24 per cent, and supply, consumption firms dipped by 3.08 per cent and pharmaceuticals lost by 0.28 per cent.

Gaining in the industrial sector were stocks of engineering firms (0.2 per cent) and textiles (1.42 per cent). Brokers attributed to the

recovery in prices to enthusiasm sparked by a package of liberalisation measures announced by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and indications that despite the strain in political ties between Amman and Baghdad Jordanian businesses stood to benefit from Iraq's oil-for-food deal with the United Nations.

"Several Jordanian companies seem to have received explicit assurances from Iraq that Baghdad will give them priority while placing orders for food and medicine as well as other related items that are permissible for exports to Iraq," said a broker.

Investors also drew heavily from the measures announced by Mr. Kabariti that included customs duty exemption for export-oriented imports and liberalised procedures for customs clearance for imports. "Many investors are expecting that these measures will be followed by further moves that should encourage investment in the country and increase the profitability of export-oriented industries," added the broker.

Middle East bank created

UNITED NATIONS (USIA) — The United States and Russia Thursday formally opened the agreement for the Bank for Economic Cooperation and Development in the Middle East and North Africa, paving the way for economic and commercial integration of the region and hopefully bolstering the sagging peace process.

Representatives of the two nations, cosponsors of the Middle East peace process, deposited the agreement with the U.N. secretary general and declared the pact open for signatures by prospective members. The bank will be located in Cairo. It can begin operations once perspective members complete their domestic ratifications and the agreement enters into force.

The bank has capital of \$3,300 million and drawing rights of about \$5,000 million, the founders said.

"This unique new institution, the result of an historic joint proposal by Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians, is designed to support the Middle East peace process by strengthening and expanding the economic foundation necessary for a durable peace in the region," a joint U.S.-Russian statement said.

The agreement, according to the joint statement, "will promote private sector

investment, regional infrastructure development and regional economic cooperation." The project bank will complement the work of existing institutions such as the World Bank and "will support regional efforts to establish an open, competitive regional economy characterised by cooperative relations and sustainable economic growth," the statement added.

U.S. Ambassador Edward Gnehm said the United States believes the bank will play a crucial role in the peace process. "The fundamental aim of the agreement is 'to set up a bank unique to the Middle East to deal with regional development projects, to help economic dialogue in the region, and to be specifically tailored to the problems of the region and bring the economic benefits of peace to people,'" said Mr. Gnehm, the deputy permanent representative to the U.N.

"We know that peace becomes durable, permanent, and reinforced when people feel the benefits of peace and that means in their lives, that means their income, that means their jobs, and that means their economic well-being," the

U.S. ambassador said.

Russian Ambassador Vladimir Sidorov noted that the bank adds two dimensions to the Mideast peace effort.

The Middle East bank "has a political dimension; it has an economic dimension as well," Mr. Sidorov said. "We believe it is of specific importance right now because the peace process in the Middle East is not in its best shape."

The bank "has a certain symbolic importance underlining that we — as cosponsors of this peace process — still attach paramount importance to pushing ahead with this process and we believe this fact will have certain positive influence on the peace process in the Middle East," said Mr. Sidorov.

Both envoys appeared confident that the peace process would continue and the bank would soon be supporting water projects and other development efforts along with social programmes.

First major overhaul of Jordan's AFM will 'transform the stock exchange radically'

By Suleiman Al Khalidi

AMMAN (R) — Jordan plans to introduce a new securities law by year end which will radically reform its bourse to help it compete regionally for foreign funds, the stock market director has said.

The law hopefully will be issued before the end of the year and will aim at enhancing the efficiency, transparency and the overall performance of the stock market, and encouraging foreign investment," said Umayya Toukan director general of the Amman Financial Market (AFM).

Dr. Toukan told Reuters the new law, the first major overhaul of the AMF since it was set up in 1978 would

"transform the exchange radically" to enhance its regional competitiveness to attract foreign funds.

The law, part of Jordan's wider IMF-backed reforms, will loosen the state's grip over the bourse and encourage faster and clearer presentation of company results.

The securities law, drafted with World Bank assistance, restructures the AFM, which now combines the running of the stock market with a regulatory role.

It sets up a government watchdog, the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) to oversee two new private-sector bodies.

The first is the Amman Securities Exchange, which

will run the market's daily operations under the guidance of the SEC. The second is the central depository body for settlement and clearing of stock, which will centralise and automate the current manual share settlement which involves cumbersome paperwork.

The exchange and the central depository body will both have boards of directors composed of licensed financial brokerage firms.

The SEC with wide ranging powers to regulate and supervise all trading of securities will license brokerage firms, Dr. Toukan said.

The new law also regulates Jordan's first mutual funds, with managers' accreditation falling under

SEC jurisdiction.

Dr. Toukan said the AFM will be helped by the Paris Bourse and the French stock market's central depository and clearing body SICOM to automate the stock market's operations within a year.

A tender to construct a purpose-built stock exchange is expected soon with a completion target within 18 months.

mate the stock market's operations within a year.

A tender to construct a purpose-built stock exchange is expected soon with a completion target within 18 months.

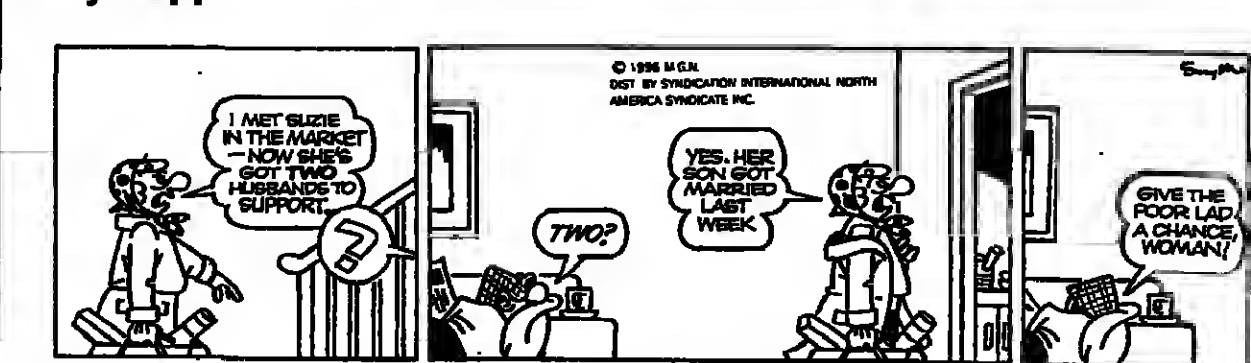
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY AUGUST 31, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Before you revise outside duties today, get the approval of loved ones and study them further, so you do not cause difficulties to ensue. Drive more carefully on the highway this evening thereby avoiding accidents.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Some changes in routines today should be studied well before putting them in operation or you could experience the wrath of an authority figure who will not be pleased. Later this evening you can go out on the town with friends.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You see new methods to add to your abundance today, however don't act too quickly without first studying the situation more closely or you could get into difficulty with some bigwig and this would not be advisable.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A close friend can assist you today to gain a desire, however don't be demanding if you want good results and continued good rapport with him or her. This evening will be good for going out with your mate and have some fun.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You are inspired about some new career activities today however after you tackle them you may have some difficulty which you had not considered in the first place. Be steadfast in your decision and you can be successful.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You may find that another person today may get in the way of your finest goals so don't be discouraged with the initial results and keep plugging away and you will gain your success. You can double efforts in the days ahead.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) Do nothing today which could disturb someone who is of a practical nature concerning some important career activities. This person can be a great help, so gain as much experience as you possibly can at this time.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A new interest seem very interesting to you today however make sure you apprise yourself of hidden factors or you could find yourself in quite a difficulty with those in authority who could make your career in jeopardy.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) An emotional matter may seem fine today, however the other person involved in this situation could back out. Be thoughtful of your mate later this evening and you will see that he or she will be very romantic.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Someone who is acting on your sympathies today is best to be avoided or you could find yourself in the situation of explaining your activities to some bigwig. Gain gratitude and add prestige to your reputation by assisting a bigwig.

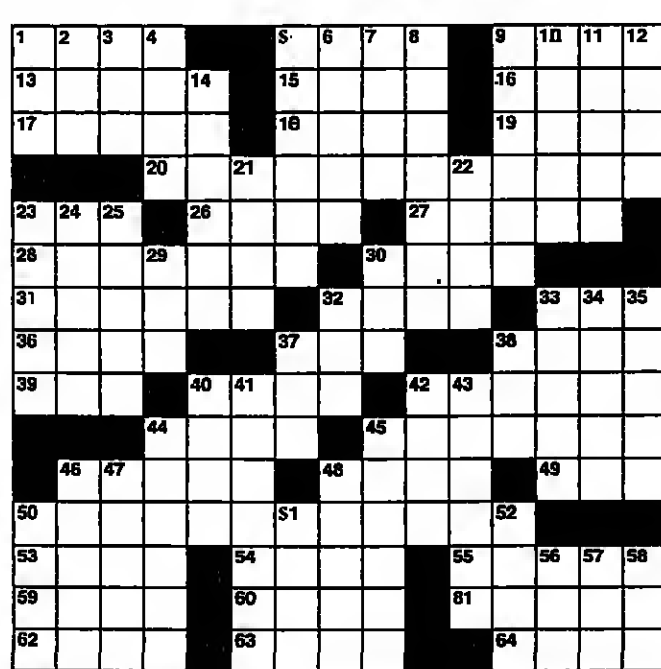
AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You begin regular activities wisely today, however later you decide to make changes concerning some new project and this will not please those in authority. Reconsider your decision and you can gain much success.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Any entertainments today planned will require more attention in the days ahead if not worked out properly, so you should think out any possible change of action. Later this evening meet with a knowledgeable individual.

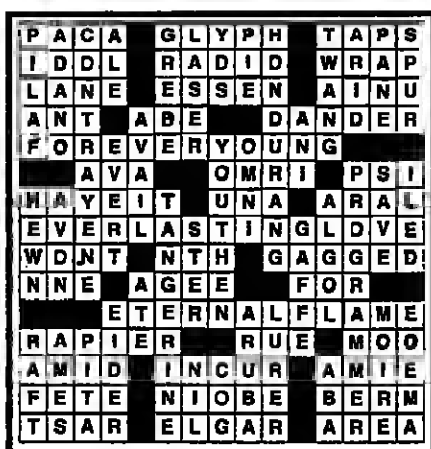
Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden-

THE Daily Crossword by Florence C. Adler

- ACROSS
- 1 Annie Oakley
 - 5 Biblical name of Syria
 - 9 Taxis
 - 13 Self-evident truth
 - 15 Be defeated
 - 16 Site of Tej Mahal
 - 17 Fitzgerald's wife
 - 18 Dutch colonist
 - 19 Brad
 - 20 Book by Tolstoy
 - 23 — carte
 - 26 Theater award
 - 27 Literary device
 - 28 Fine
 - 30 Tribe
 - 31 Silky fabric
 - 32 Lads
 - 33 Lady of Spain: abbr.
 - 36 Dill, old style
 - 37 Collage
 - 38 And others: abbr.
 - 39 Dictionary: abbr.
 - 40 River in Hades
 - 42 Moon goddess
 - 44 Additional
 - 45 More grouchy
 - 46 Greek philosopher
 - 48 Baseball stadium
 - 49 After deduction
 - 50 Book by Pearl Buck
 - 53 Horse
 - 54 Couple
 - 55 Spooky
 - 59 Last of the Stuarts
 - 60 Sea eagle
 - 61 Oxe
 - 62 Annoying person
 - 63 Oboe
 - 64 Cupola



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- DOWN
- 1 La —, Bolivia
 - 2 Hatchet
 - 3 Part of RSVP
 - 4 Carbonated water
 - 5 City on the Hudson
 - 6 Abounding in certain birds
 - 7 Confused
 - 8 Unhappily
 - 9 Howitzer
 - 10 Encore
 - 11 Salty
 - 12 Room in a casa
 - 14 Cloak
 - 21 Memo
 - 22 Time periods
 - 23 Shock: var.
 - 24 Sierra —
 - 25 Eli
 - 29 Envoy: abbr.
 - 30 Swindle
 - 32 Fight in the ring
 - 33 Mug
 - 34 Wife of a rajah
 - 35 Wide awake
 - 37 Stain
 - 38 Moose
 - 40 Explorer De —
 - 41 Policeman
 - 42 Court litigant
 - 43 Jubilant
 - 44 Lodestone
 - 45 Divided
 - 46 Cell
 - 47 Has a tendency
 - 48 Large fishing net
 - 50 Two-wheeled carriage
 - 51 Confront boldly
 - 52 Uppermost part
 - 56 — de Janeiro
 - 57 Doctrine
 - 58 Needle opening

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
NOTES: BANK OF JORDAN - AMMAN
TELEPHONE: 20111 / 20112
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (7/20/1996 - 22/08/1996)
MARKET REPORT

SYMBOL	LAST	CHANGE	DATE	TIME	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE	OPENING	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING	CHANGE	MARKET	SHARPS
100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00
100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00
100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00

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100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00
100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00
100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00

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100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00
100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00
100.000	100.000	0.000	10.00	1.00	100	10000	10000.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.000	100.00	100.00

DAILY BUSINESS NEWS

A review of news from the Arabic press

Arab Gulf states likely to employ about 60,000 Jordanians over next 12 months

LABOUR MINISTER Abdul Hafez Al Shakhaneh expects the Jordanian workforce that will be employed in the Arab Gulf states over the next twelve months to be between 50,000 and 60,000 persons working in all types of jobs. The minister described the ties with Arab Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman, as "excellent" particularly in the area on employing Jordanian labour. He indicated that Jordanians are gradually returning to the United Arab Emirates and that the Kuwaiti private sector has started to employ some qualified Jordanian banking personnel. Dr. Shakhaneh stressed that Jordan seeks to expand ties with the Arab Gulf states to open more employment opportunities for Jordanians.

The minister said that the Jordanian labour market is in need of about 150,000 foreign or "guest" workers to fill jobs shunned by Jordanians, especially in the construction sector. He indicated that there are about 350,000 guest workers at present in Jordan and that the extra number will be replaced gradually within the framework of a series of measures being taken by the concerned authorities to organise the labour market. Dr. Shakhaneh said that recently some 8,000 job opportunities were created for Jordanians by baying them replace guest workers in the local market.

According to the minister, there are about 26,000 foreign maids in Jordan and that their legal status from the standpoint of residency and fees will be rectified. He said there is no intention to send those maids away as demand for such jobs from Jordanian women is not much.

Meanwhile, a senior Ministry of Labour official has said that Saudi Arabia will this week sign contracts with another 1,000 teachers in addition to the 2,500 teachers who were contracted earlier (AJ Aswaq).

REUTERS • REUTERS •

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 30/08/96 19:32

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.4788	0.6406	1.1995	108.67	1.3683	1.5102	1.6588	5.0630	
DE Mark	0.6752	1.0000	0.6328	6.710	73.43	0.9247	1.0204	1.2124	3.4222
GB Sterling	1.5810	1.5610	1.0000	1.8722	189.39	2.1359	2.3683	2.5907	7.9074
CHF Franc	0.6334	1.2318	0.6332	1.0000	90.54	1.1386	1.2579	1.3821	4.2148
JP Yen	0.0092	1.3597	0.5886	1.1033	1.0000	1.2581	13.87	152.48	4.6529
CA Dollar	0.7308	1.0810	0.4670	0.8768	1.28	1.1032	1.2127	3.6988	
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9800	0.4243	0.0795	0.9066	1.2581	13.87	152.48	4.6529
NL Guilder	0.0028	0.6113	0.3858	0.7234	35.48	0.8246	909.11		3.0486
FR Franc	0.1975	0.2922	0.1265	23.7064	21.45	0.2703	32.76	32.7600	

Energy

Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	21.45	21.50
WTI	22.25	22.15
Bony	21.45	21.50
Dubai	19.25	19.34
UL Gas	211.00	211.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2687	0.3946	0.17083	0.32018	29.0023
AE Dirham	0.2722	0.40283	0.17443	0.32694	29.6138
KW Dinar	1.3450	4.9505	2.1427	4.04806	363.757
OM Rial	0.5770	3.32465	1.69924	3.18471	288.577
CY Pound	2.1746	3.2162	1.3924	2.6097	236.346

Metal Prices

Metal	Bid	Offer
Cold (oz)	386.2	386.7
Platinum (oz)	395	395
Al (3 Months)	2030	2035
CU (3 Months)	2034	2038
Zinc (3 Months)	811	812
NI (3 Months)	7490	7500

Currency Deposit Rates (Bil)

Period	1 -	3 -	6 -	9 -	12 -
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.31	5.43	5.58	5.93	6.06
JPY	5.27	5.45	5.58	5.94	6.21
DEM	3.05	3.05	3.09	3.18	3.21
FRF	3.65	3.90	4.05	4.03	4.12
CHF	1.98	2.03	2.10	2.09	2.25
ITL	8.44	8.46	8.35	8.22	9.17

Energy

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (lb/ib)	123.83	Spot
Cocoa (lb/ib)	141	Spot
Sugar (lb/ib)	38	Spot
Wheat (lb/ib)	49.5	Spot
Soy (lb/ib)	23.88	Spot
Tea (lb/ib)	112	Spot
Barley (lb/ib)	3.42	Spot
Rice (lb/ib)	425	Spot

JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.709	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1023	1.1078
DE Mark	0.4785	0.4809
CHF Franc	0.592	0.595
FR Franc	0.1398	0.1403
JP Yen	0.6527	0.658
NL Guilder	0.4268	0.4289
IT Lira	0.4673	0.4696

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

JORDAN MARKETPLACE *** JORDAN MARKETPLACE *** JORDAN MARKETPLACE ***

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Andre Agassi of the United States returns a shot from Leander Paes of India during second round action at the U.S. Open in New York. Agassi is the number six seed at the Open (Reuters photo)

U.S. Open

Escape artist Agassi reaches third round

Graf, Muster, Sanchez through

NEW YORK (AFP) — Andre Agassi brought Leander Paes down to earth with a thud Thursday as the sixth-seeded American wriggled out of a one-set, four-game deficit to reach the third round of the U.S. Open tennis championships.

"He was playing out-of-this-world tennis," said Agassi who trailed 3-6 and 0-4 before winning 18 of the last 19 games of the match.

"It felt like I was doing everything I could do the first set."

Agassi didn't feel like he donated my serve. I was on his serve for most of the set, had a couple of deuce games, a couple of 15-30s. I just couldn't break him because of the shots he was coming up with."

Agassi, the 1994 U.S. Open champion, won the match 3-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-0. The momentum swung his way in the fifth game of the second set, when he saved five break points to hold and launch a seven-game winning streak.

After Paes held for 1-1 in the third, Agassi won the last 11 games of the match.

"This is probably as extreme as you get, to be down 6-3, four-love, then to win the next 18 of 19 games. I never would have thought at 6-3, four-love, that was it, he was only going to get one more game."

Agassi beat Paes in the semifinals of the Atlanta Olympics and went on to win the gold medal. Paes claimed the bronze.

The 23-year-old Indian said he knew going into the match that he wouldn't win a slug-fest with Agassi.

"My style of playing, I can't take on Andre too much from the back of the court," he said. "I felt if I caught his ball early, before it kicked, I could pressurise him a lot. I was doing that."

"Somewhere around four-love, after that long game, I lost the rhythm on my serve."

"My first serve percentage started going down after that. I wasn't able to come into the net as much... What was working well against Andre is I was cutting his angles off. I changed my game plan



Sergi Bruguera of Spain returns a shot from Michael Stich of Germany during second round action at the U.S. Open in New York (Reuters photo)

and started going for the line a bit more. I got hurt from it."

Agassi lined up a third-round match with Jan Siemerink of the Netherlands, who beat Spain's Carlos Moya 7-6 (7/2), 6-4, 6-4.

Third-seeded Austrian Thomas Muster advanced with less fuss, beating Austrian qualifier Dirk Dier 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

"In a Grand Slam, you get over in three sets, you're very lucky and very happy," Muster said. "You don't really want to play in the heat five sets or something like that. You want to keep your energy alive as long as possible."

In the third round Muster will play two-time French Open champion Sergi Bruguera, who beat former Wimbledon champion Michael Stich of Germany 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

Bruguera, whose ranking has fallen to 73rd in the world since he won his second straight French crown in 1994, had surgery to repair torn ligaments in his right ankle in December. He didn't play a tournament until February and only reached one clay court

quarter-final, but won the silver medal in Atlanta. In women's second-round matches, world number one and top seed Steffi Graf, the defending champion, beat Austrian Karin Kschwendt 6-2, 6-1 in just 52 minutes.

Graf, who said a calf muscle injury kept her from practising the week before the tournament, said she was satisfied with her match, despite a few too many errors in the early games.

"It took me a little long to get into the match," she said. "I made a lot of mistakes in the beginning, really rushed through points. It took me a while to calm down and start playing points a little better."

Third-seeded Spaniard Arantxa Sanchez Vicario beat American Nicole Arendt 6-2, 6-2 in the night session on stadium court.

Seventh-seeded Czech Jana Novotna also reached the third round with a 6-2, 4-6, 6-2 victory over Argentina's Florencia Labat.

Bowe fined, promoter suspended for brawl

NEW YORK (AFP) — Riddick Bowe was fined \$250,000 and his promoter, Rock Newman, was banned from any events involving Bowe for a year as a result of a post-fight brawl here last month.

Bowe's fight at Madison Square Garden with Poland's Andrew Golota was halted with 27 seconds remaining in the seventh round when Golota was disqualified for a series of low blows.

Cornermen for both fighters began brawling moments after the bout was halted and the melee spread into the spectator's section.

Under terms of an agreement, Bowe and Newman will forfeit \$250,000 of the purse, \$200,000 going to the State of New York and \$50,000 going to charity.

Newman and his Spencer promotions had its promoter's license suspended until July 31, 1997. And because New Jersey, Nevada and other states will honour the New York ban, Newman is effectively shut out of the fight game until next August.

"These penalties are unprecedented in the boxing community," New York State Athletic Commission Chairman Floyd Patterson said.

"Clearly these disciplinary measures send the message that this type of violent and outrageous conduct will not be tolerated in our state."

Newman cannot be involved in the likely rematch between Bowe and Golota, planned for December in Atlantic City. Lou Duva, Golota's manager, will likely promote the bout.

Bernard Brooks, a vice president of Newman's promotion firm, must resign his post and cannot be employed by Bowe or Newman for one year.

Jason Harris, a member of Bowe's entourage who was videotaped attacking Golota with a cellular phone, was permanently banned from being employed by Newman or Bowe.

Cleveland sore as Ravens soar in Baltimore

BALTIMORE, Maryland (AFP) — Imagine your beloved leaves you for another, then you steal someone else's lover for yourself.

There is joy mingled with sorrow and regret and far too many tears are shed by all.

Now you know how American football fans here feel about the Baltimore Ravens' home game Sunday against Oakland, the first regular-season National Football League (NFL) contest in this city since 1983.

On a dark and snowy March night in 1984, owner Robert Irsay moved the NFL Colts from here to Indianapolis for a richer deal.

For 12 seasons, fans suffered. Nearby teams could not fill the void.

Then came Art Modell, whose Cleveland Browns drew loyal support of more than 20,000 a game, but struggled financially and on the field. Modell is among the few NFL owners whose funds came from the team.

Modell searched for a better deal and found NFL-hungry Baltimore, so he announced at mid-season last year the club would move for this year. The Browns lost seven of their final eight games and fan club members from as far away as Japan, Australia and England were outraged.

Clevelanders fought and kept rights to the name and colors for a promised replacement club in 1999 if a new stadium is built. But the "dog pound" section of foosy fans sits empty. Residents are in a quandary about who they should root for. They know who to root against.

Not even hometown literary giant Edgar Allan Poe, whose poem "The Raven" inspired the nickname choice, would have written such a dark and twisted tale. Baltimore fans know the pain Clevelanders now feel.

"Cleveland made Modell and then he did them wrong. He is no better than Irsay," said Wayne Wise, a Ravens season-ticket holder.

Players cannot escape the spiritual tug-of-war. Ravens centre Steve Everett wears a Cleveland Browns bandanna under his helmet.

"I have got an awful lot of people back in Cleveland I still talk to and I wanted to let them know I haven't forgotten them," he said.

Baltimore's fan club, the Raven maniacs, might be the only ones who love this team, which has come to symbol the ownership greed that has prompted five franchise shift bids by NFL owners in three years.

"This team will be hated everywhere outside of Baltimore," NFL television commentator Bob Trumpy said. "Art Modell's actions were criminal. I wish them nothing but bad."

Trumpy will be among 260 reporters from around the world at the Raiders-Ravens game, where Oakland will be without injured quarterback Jeff Hostetler and at the mercy of fans who have waited 12 years for this day.

"I get goose bumps walking into this place again," fan Dennis Clamptitt said as he walked into Memorial Stadium, the Ravens' home for two years while a new 200 million-dollar "nest" is built.

Clamptitt needed a bank loan to afford the \$6,000 it took to purchase the right to buy season tickets. The money will help pay for the stadium.

The most respectful act so far came when receiver Michael Jackson caught the first touchdown in Ravens' history in an exhibition game, then gave a fan sitting behind the end zone the football.

"They waited 12 years for this," he said. "It's the least I can do."

Other openers Sunday find Arizona at Indianapolis, Atlanta at Carolina, Cincinnati at St. Louis, Detroit at Minnesota, Green Bay at Tampa Bay, New England at Miami, Kansas City at Houston.

Philadelphia at Washington, New Orleans at San Francisco, Seattle at San Diego, Pittsburgh at Jacksonville, Buffalo at the New York Giants and Denver hosting the New York Jets. Reigning NFL champion Dallas opens Monday at Chicago.

Stubborn Strachan facing FA wrath

COVENTRY (AFP) — Gordon Strachan, one of the most respected figures in British football, faced a heavy fine and a possible ban on Friday after causing the temporary abandonment of a reserve match.

The 39-year-old assistant manager at Coventry and former Scottish international was booked by referee Tony Green for dissent after only 10 minutes of the Pontins league game at West Brom on Thursday.

Six minutes later Strachan was given his marching orders for foul and abusive language but refused to leave the field.

Green asked the Coventry bench if they could intervene to persuade Ron Atkinson's deputy to leave the pitch.

But when this was unsuccessful, the official decided he had no option but to pick up the ball, signal to his linesmen and walk off the pitch.

Eleven minutes later, the game was finally restarted without Strachan but the FA have already called for Green to fax them

his report of the incident.

Strachan's senior professional status and his position in the Coventry management team, are unlikely to help his position.

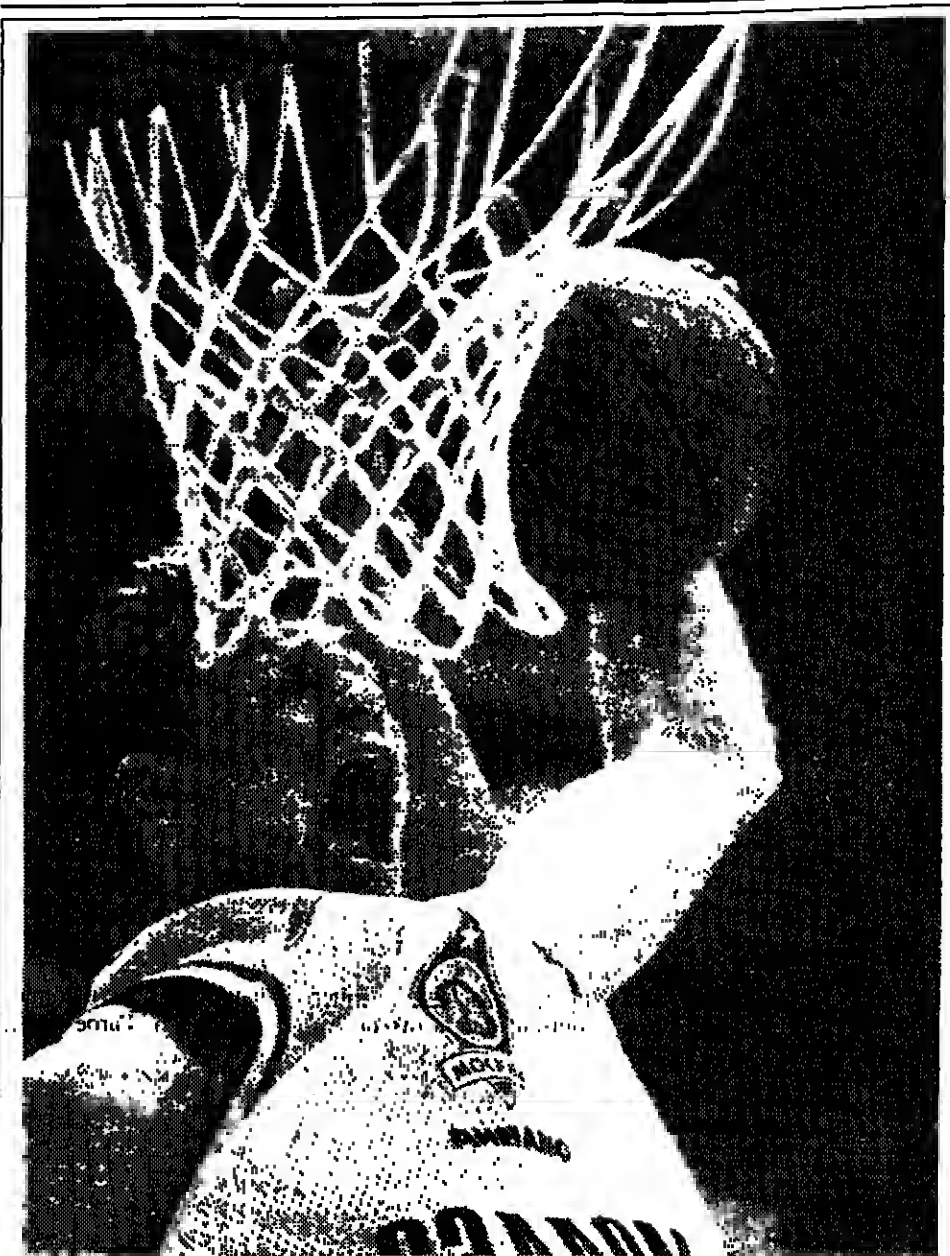
A large fine and an extended ban could follow, although the FA were reluctant this morning to give too much away.

FA spokesman Steve Double said: "We've asked for the report from the referee. We will study it and decide what action to take after the weekend."

Coventry chairman Bryan Richardson said it was unlikely the club would take any disciplinary action against Strachan.

"It is a very unfortunate situation. I know Gordon well. He is extremely competitive at all times but if he felt he had done something sufficiently wrong to be sent off, he would be prepared to go," said Richardson.

"I think he just wanted to know why he was being sent off. One could really do with a bit of calm and common sense in a situation like this."



Ruslan Boidakov of Dinamo - Moscow grimaces as he catches a ball during a match against Olympiakos - Athens in an international club basketball tournament "Trofej Beograd" in Belgrade. Olympiakos won the match 69-60 (Reuters photo)

Mariners win; Angels rout Yankees

SEATTLE (R) — Mark White's grand slam with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning lifted the Seattle Mariners to a wild 9-6 win over the Baltimore Orioles Thursday.

Whiten, hitless in his previous seven at-bats, smacked the first pitch he saw from closer Randy Myers (3-4) over the right-field wall for his third career grand slam.

It was Myers' seventh blown save of the season as the Orioles, who blew a 5-2 lead and carried a 6-5 margin from the sixth into the ninth, lost for just the third time in 61 contests when leading after eight.

Alex Rodriguez started the rally with his fifth hit of the game, establishing a new career mark for the American League hitting leader. Rodriguez, who had a pair of doubles and has seven consecutive hits, is hitting a major-league best .373 this season.

After Rodriguez singled, Ken Griffey Jr. walked and Myers got Edgar Martinez to bounce into what should have been a double play. But Orioles shortstop Cal Ripken booted the ball and Baltimore had to settle for a

force at second. Jay Buhner then popped out and Myers walked pinch-hitter Brian Hunter to set the stage for Whiten.

Norm Charlton (3-6) notched the victory by pitching a scoreless ninth.

Seattle (70-63) is five games behind the Texas Rangers in the AL West but pulled into a tie with Baltimore and a virtual tie with the Chicago White Sox (71-64) in the wild-card race.

At California, Garret Anderson belted a grand slam in the first inning and drove in a career-high seven runs and Jim Edmonds homered and added three RBI to lead the Angels to a 14-3 rout of the reeling New York Yankees.

The Angels wasted no time in getting to starter Wally Whitehurst (1-1). California extended its lead to 7-0 in the fourth against reliever Brian Boehringer. Gary Disarcina singled and scored on Velarde's double before Edmonds followed with his 25th homer.

The Angels set a season high for runs and banded out seven doubles to snap a three-game losing streak. The Yankees have lost five

straight and 14 of their last 20 games.

Whitehurst was drilled for four runs and four hits in one-plus innings in his second start of the season.

Joe Girardi hit a two-run homer for New York.

In Detroit, Bobby Higginson's solo homer off the facing of the third deck in right field snapped a tie and sparked a three-run eighth inning as the Tigers defeated the Kansas City Royals 4-1 to end a three-game losing streak.

In Milwaukee, Frank Rodriguez pitched his third complete game and Roberto Kelly drove in two runs to lead the Minnesota Twins to a 6-1 victory over the Brewers.

Rodriguez (13-10) allowed one run and nine hits with two walks and four strikeouts. With his 13th victory, he got the most wins by any twins pitcher since John Smiley and Kevin Tapani each won 16 in 1992.

Kelly had an RBI single in the second inning and homered in the sixth, helping Minnesota return to the .500 mark at 67-67. The Twins have won 10 of their last 13 road games.

<p>TODAY AT</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL: 634144 PHILADELPHIA</p> <p>JADE</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL: 699238 PERLA</p> <p>The Arab Cinema Surprise Ahmad Zaki...in Naser 56 (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:45, 11:00</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL: 677420 CONCORD</p> <p>CONCORD "1" Arnold Schwarzenegger & Vanessa Williams ...in ERASER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</p> <p>CONCORD "2" Ahmad Zaki...in Naser 56 (Arabic) Shows: 12:00, 3:15, 5:45, 8:15, 10:45</p>	<p>Immoun Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275</p> <p>Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimah & Hussein Tubeishat play starts 8:30 p.m</p>	<p>Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155</p> <p>PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights At 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155-640155</p>
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King visits Madaba, says Jordan will successfully confront all challenges

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein has urged Jordanians to pool their efforts towards building the state of institutions and said that he was "confident that the Kingdom will soon witness the birth of a new dawn and a promising future."

Addressing a cheering crowd of several thousand during a visit to Madaba Governorate on Thursday, the King said: "It has been Jordan's destiny to confront continued challenges and difficult situations but it has been able to overcome hardships, thanks to the efforts of its people and their determination to pursue the path of construction."

Jordan, "continues to serve as a model for others in terms of democratic rule and in its people's participation in decision-making," he said.

Thousands of people from

the Madaba Governorate gathered at the rally to meet the King, cheered and performed traditional dances. They were led by Parliament members from the Madaba area, representatives of local organisations and other prominent figures.

"We must serve as an example to others in terms of loyalty to the nation, determination to continue the endeavours for construction and serving the future generations," King Hussein told the crowd.

The King said he took pride in belonging to the Jordanian people and expressed affection to the people of Madaba Governorate. "There is no discrimination among communities and factions and where everyone belongs to the common march for the achievement of the common goals," he said.

"It is the duty of the Jordanian people to protect their country's achievements and to remain tolerant and working loyally to serve their nation," he added.

King Hussein, who was accompanied on the visit by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah, Prince Faisal, Prince Hamzeh and Prince Hashem along with Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh and other officials, was met by Cabinet ministers, the Madaba governor, heads of tribes and representatives of public and private sectors.

In a speech delivered at the rally, Madaba Deputy Samih Al Farah reaffirmed his district's allegiance to the Hashemite Throne and expressed support for the government's endeavours to carry out economic reform.

Deputy Farah also denounced recent acts of rioting and sabotage against public and private property. Jamal Rawahneh from Bani Hamideh tribe condemned the riots as an attempt to cause splits among Jordanian ranks. He said that those behind the unrest were trying to sow "the seeds of doubt and sedition in the local community and create chaos that would only serve the enemies."

Mrs. Nawal Faouri, who represents the women unions in Madaba Governorate, reviewed the achievements of the Jordanian women unions under King Hussein's reign and pledged continued efforts to build the country's institutions and protect its achievements.



A young girl breaks free from the lines of thousands of waving Jordanians crowded along the streets of Madaba to greet His Majesty King Hussein during his visit to the town on Thursday (Reuters photo)



Baker produces canned bread

TOKYO (AFP) — A Japanese baker, seeking to help survivors of the Kobe earthquake, has come up with canned bread that remains edible for more than a year. The idea came to Yoshihiko Akimoto, 43, after last year's quake, when he regretted that fresh bread he donated to survivors could not keep very long. "I guarantee that this bread is very tasty," Mr. Akimoto, owner of the Akimoto Bakery in Koroiso, 150 kilometres northwest of Tokyo, told AFP Friday. "Four months of taste tests show that." The baker has refused to release the recipe for his "Kan Kan Buredo" which he intends to license to one of the major commercial bakeries who have already been in contact. The canned bread has been on sale in Akimoto's bakery and a few local supermarkets since July. It costs 300 yen (\$2.8) for a 100-gramme (3.5-ounce) can. While it cannot compete with a crusty baguette just out of the oven, Akimoto says his canned raisin bread is far superior to dry biscuits found in military rations.

Barbie doll bandits collared in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA (R) — Three security guards were arrested and charged with stealing 42 Barbie dolls. Police arrested the guards after scrutinising security videotapes taken at the Fao Schwarz Toy Store in the King of Prussia shopping mall. Police Lieutenant Robert Deuber said. Searches recovered the dolls, which were worth more than \$2,000 at retail prices, as well as other merchandise, he said. Lt. Deuber added that the demand for Barbie dolls was high enough to command a price close to retail. "If there's a market out there, I guess somebody will try to fill it."

China labourers feast on swan eggs

BEIJING (R) — Construction workers building a road through marshland in China's northwestern Qinghai province have been feasting on the eggs of several endangered species of wild birds, the China Youth Daily said. In May and June every year, labourers wade through marshland in Maduo county, loading hand-held tractors with the eggs of swans, grey cranes, wild geese and other endangered species, which they fry up for dinner, the newspaper said. The marshland, near the source of the Yellow River, is a breeding ground for over 30 types of waterfowl. Swans and grey cranes are protected species in China but most people consider it acceptable to eat their eggs, it said.

Chinese scientists probe topsy-turvy spring

BEIJING (AFP) — A Chinese spring that freezes in summer and steams in winter is attracting floods of scientists, meteorologists and curious tourists, China's official news agency reported Wednesday. The spring, in central China's Henan province, begins to freeze in March, Xinhua said, and several weeks later an area of more than 600 square metres is covered by a thick layer of ice. As the temperature drops in mid-autumn the ice begins to melt and by winter the area around the spring feels warm. "Scientists have been trying to explain the phenomenon, but to no avail," Xinhua said.

New life for fragile peace process but tough part is round the corner

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A resumption of Israeli-Palestinian talks has breathed new life into the peace process but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu so far remains unwilling to take the tough steps needed for real progress with either the Palestinians or Syria, aides and analysts said Friday.

The fragility of the peace process was highlighted when a Palestinian spokesman said lengthy talks Thursday night between Mr. Netanyahu's top foreign policy adviser and the deputy to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat yielded "nothing serious" and "confirmed the Israeli policy of stalling."

Earlier in the day, Mr. Netanyahu broke with three months of inaction and agreed to resume fully-fledged negotiations on implementing the Oslo autonomy accords signed with the Palestinians by the previous Labour government in 1995.

But the decision came only after Mr. Arafat abandoned a low-key three-month effort to entice Israel back to the talks by calling the first mass protests since the end of the intifada and the start of the autonomy process in 1993.

His call for a general strike which was widely fol-

lowed in the Palestinian territories and for a mass prayer service Friday in East Jerusalem drew the expected warnings from Mr. Netanyahu against "radical statements and actions," but it also prompted the Israeli leader into action.

At a hastily arranged meeting Thursday between the main Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, the two sides agreed to resume full political negotiations from next week.

The two men avoided broaching any of the key outstanding issues — notably Israel's delayed withdrawal from Hebron which is the most flagrant Israeli failure to comply with the Oslo accord or a possible Arafat-Netanyahu meeting.

The renewed contacts were nevertheless welcomed by a broad range of Israelis.

"Paradoxically the pressures the Palestinians have put on us are the only thing making Israeli diplomacy budge," a senior foreign ministry official closely involved in the peace process told AFP.

"This was a very good week for peace, because everything began again, despite the rhetoric from both sides," he said on condition of anonymity. But the depth of Mr.

Netanyahu's turnaround was quickly put in question by the results of the Thursday night meeting between his policy adviser Dore Gold and Mahmoud Abbas, Mr. Arafat's deputy. Palestinian officials had hoped those private talks would yield agreement on a first direct meeting between Mr. Arafat and Mr. Netanyahu, which the Palestinians see as the only real proof the new Israeli leader is serious about peace.

But Hanan Asfour, head of the Palestinian negotiations department, said the meeting had simply "confirmed the Israeli policy of stalling."

"There was no result and nothing serious happened" at the meeting, he told AFP. Close associates say Mr. Netanyahu openly acknowledges that his deep family roots in the Zionist movement and his visceral commitment to battling Palestinians since his own brother was killed in a 1979 Palestinian hijacking have made it difficult for him to move on key aspects of the peace process.

"Meeting with Mr. Arafat is not just a political act or a question of signing papers but it's a reconciliation with Israel's toughest enemy, the murderer of my brother, and that represents a sea change

for me," one associate quoted Mr. Netanyahu as saying earlier this week.

He also speaks openly of his difficulty in ordering Israel's withdrawal from Hebron, which he calls "the cradle of Jewish civilisation."

The Israeli-Syrian peace track, meanwhile, also appears mired in its deepest impasse since the start of the peace process.

An attempt by Mr. Netanyahu this week to revive the stalled negotiations via a U.S. intermediary without agreeing to yield any of the Golan Heights which Israel seized from Syria in 1967 fell flat.

U.S. Senator Arlen Specter ended a three-day shuttle mission Thursday admitting that "both sides are not ready to sit together because there are too many preconditions on each side."

The impasse coincided with a series of Syrian troop movements in Lebanon which experts described as the most significant since the two sides first met at the conference in 1991.

But the senior foreign ministry official insists that the right-wing Israeli leader will eventually yield to the peace process realities. "Netanyahu will continue to play the game, it's just that the pace of negotiations will be very slow," he said.

Israel says soldier killed in Lebanon

TEL AVIV (R) — The Israeli army said Friday that an Israeli soldier was killed on Thursday in a clash with guerrillas in Israel's occupation zone in South Lebanon.

An army force on operations encountered a gang of terrorists. In the exchange of fire ... an Israeli soldier was killed.

During the clash Hizbollah terrorists fired mortars at an army position in the Western sector of the security zone and at a village in the zone, an army statement said.

No Israeli was wounded in the clash, the army said. A military official said two Lebanese civilians were wounded in the village.

"From Hizbollah fire directed at Shihin village, two civilians from South Lebanon were wounded. The Israeli army returned fire toward the sources. The shooting into a civilian village is another violation of the understandings," the official said.

U.S.-brokered understandings that ended an Israeli blitz on South Lebanon against Hizbollah guerrillas in April forbid either side from hitting civilians.

Posuvalyuk in Baghdad to boost bilateral relations

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk arrived here Friday, Russian embassy sources in the Iraqi capital said.

An embassy official here would not give any further information about the visit, but in Moscow, a foreign ministry spokesman said Thursday that the trip was intended to give a boost to Iraqi-Russian relations ahead of the moderating of the oil embargo imposed on Iraq in August 1990.

Mr. Posuvalyuk was to discuss with Iraqi leaders "the participation of Russian companies in implementing U.N. Security Council Resolution 986" permitting limited exports of Iraqi crude oil, the spokesman said.

The oil-for-food agreement between Iraq and the United Nations, concluded in May, allows Baghdad to sell up to \$2 billion in crude every six months to buy food and medicine.

The deputy foreign minister was accompanied by officials from Russia's ministry of oil and energy and Russian oil companies.

Two senior diplomats in Baghdad said the accord will not be implemented before mid-October, and the coordinator of U.N. humanitarian activities in Iraq, Gualtero Fulcheri, said it would take time to set up the arrangements for implementing 986.

Canadians seek business

A delegation representing Canadian oil and financial-services firms arrived here Friday to explore business possibilities in Iraq.

The delegation includes representatives from oil-and-gas firm Novacor and Ranger Oil, drilling-and-oil equipment company Dreco, the agri construction firm, the printer Canadian Banknotes and financial-services company Price Waterhouse-Canada.

"We will explore future cooperation and make offers under the provision that the embargo is lifted," said delegation head Gabriel Khayat, who chairs the Mississauga (Ontario) board of trade. "We hope the embargo will be lifted," he added.

The 20 delegates brought an ambulance as a gift to the Iraqi Ministry of Health. They are the second Canadian business group to visit Baghdad this week.

Foreign businessmen have been turning up frequently in Baghdad since Iraq signed the "oil-for-food" deal with the United Nations.

U.S. tries to push PUK-KDP peace after brokering truce in north Iraq

LONDON (AFP) — U.S. mediator Robert Deutsch was meeting here Friday with representatives of two rival Kurdish factions and an Iraqi opposition group to consolidate a ceasefire in northern Iraq.

The U.S. embassy said Mr. Deutsch, director of Iranian and Iraqi affairs at the State Department, was holding talks at the embassy with leaders of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

The two groups fought each other for 12 days, leaving hundreds dead, until the United States stepped in to broker a ceasefire that went into force on Wednesday.

The Iraqi National Congress (INC), an Iraqi opposition umbrella group, was also to participate in the talks, the time and venue of which were not disclosed.

An INC spokesman here said the PUK delegation was led by Latif Rashid, the KDP by Hoshiyar Zebari and the INC by the president of its executive council, Ahmad Chababi.

The spokesman said the meetings would extend into the weekend and would conclude with a final joint statement.

The INC includes Arab and Kurdish groups and has in the past monitored truces between the rival Kurdish factions.

A U.S. State Department spokesman said the meetings would focus on measures "to develop monitoring arrangements to strengthen the ceasefire."

A separate peace conference to be chaired by the assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs, Robert Pelletreau, who brokered the latest ceasefire, will be held at a later date, U.S. officials said.

The PUK and KDP have jointly controlled northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad since the end of the 1991 Gulf war, but have been locked in a bloody struggle over power and custom revenues since May 1994 in which more than 2,000 people have died.

Mr. Deutsch mediated a preliminary peace accord between the same two factions in Drogheda, Ireland, a year ago, but there was never a final binding agreement.

"And of course in the absence of a firm accord, there was continued tension, and things got worse and worse over the year," said an INC source.

At that time, the two sides

pledged to maintain and make permanent a ceasefire, to demilitarise the city of Erbil, the PUK-controlled Kurdistan capital, and to agree on collection and distribution of border tariffs.

They also agreed to cease sniping at one another in the media, to respect the rights of one another's followers and to release all detainees held during hostilities, according to a joint declaration at the time.

Mr. Deutsch said after the Drogheda meeting they had achieved "a series of confidence-building measures and a statement of principles," indicating progress and willingness to find a solution.

The PUK and KDP also agreed in Drogheda to form a "neutral commission" under INC auspices, and to reactivate the Kurdish parliament whose seat had been in Erbil.

Turkey, which signed the Drogheda accord, said it was satisfied, and "gratified to see that all the parties recognise openly the legitimate security concerns of Turkey."

Turkey has been keen for an agreement between the KDP and PUK so that the northern Iraq region can be better controlled to stop Ankara's own Kurdish rebels from grouping there.

More clues point to bomb blast on TWA

NEW YORK (AFP) — Officials investigating the blast aboard TWA Flight 800 have come up with more clues suggesting a bomb was smuggled aboard the doomed Boeing 747, the New York Times reported Friday.

Nonetheless, investigators emphasised that they still lack enough evidence to say with certainty that a bomb blew up the plane on July 17, the newspaper said, quoting anonymous sources.

"We just don't have that one piece yet, the one piece that would let you call it a bomb," an explosives expert said. "We're real close. We're just not there yet."

A computer simulation of the blast, using data from the cockpit voice recorder as well as data culled from bits of recovered debris, allowed investigators to say that the blast occurred on the right side of the jet, between rows 20 and 27, and above and ahead of the wing — that is, just above the plane's centre fuel tank.

Investigators also say the backs of several seats in row 23 contain fist-sized holes, according to the article. That part of the plane is the same place they found traces of the explosive PETN.

The National Transportation Safety Board, which is overseeing the investigation, declined to comment on the newspaper reports.

The anonymous sources said they could not rule out the possibility of a missile having downed the plane because it could have done the same damage as a bomb.

In at least two previous cases, bombs in the same area have triggered deadly plane explosions. Strategically placed over a fuel tank, such small bombs can cause massive damage by igniting fuel vapours. That was the case in 1989, when a bomb brought down an Avianca jet above Bogota. In 1994, a similarly placed bomb aboard a Philippine airlines jet en route to Tokyo killed a Japanese passenger.

Bosnia municipal election could come in November

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian municipal elections postponed from their scheduled date of Sept. 14 could be held as soon as November.

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said on Friday. "Ambassador Frowick said in Vienna, that we would try to hold elections as soon as possible and he mentioned the dates of November 10 and 17 as possibilities."

OSCE spokesman Tom Leary told Reuters in Sarajevo. "No final decision has been made and it is not certain whether it would be technically feasible in terms of logistics to do it by November."

The OSCE is charged with supervising the elections under a mandate provided by the Dayton peace agreement. Robert Frowick heads the organisation's mission in Bosnia.

The municipal elections were postponed because of serious Serb voter registration irregularities, among a host of other problems.

Voting for higher offices including a national house of representatives and a

three-man collective presidency will still be held on Sept. 14 as originally planned.

Diplomatic sources in Bosnia said on Friday the pressure to move forward with municipal elections in November is both practical and political.

Earlier, the OSCE said it was considering holding them as late as spring 1997. But the international community worries that it would be hard to keep the military and civilian personnel necessary to run municipal elections in the field until next year.

"Armies can order their people to stay but there are a lot of diplomats and bureaucrats here from all over the world who have had their fill of Bosnia and are keen to get back to their families," said an election worker who asked not to be named.

On the political side, the U.S. administration of President Bill Clinton is said to be worried about a possible backlash over the need to keep U.S. troops in Bosnia into 1997 just to support the municipal elections.